Envisioning the Virgin: John of Morigny's *Liber visionum* and the Memory of Chartres Cathedral

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III. Introduction.

The *Liber visionum* (Book of Visions) is a fourteenth-century text that provides its readers with a set of instructions, prayers, and figures in an attempt to facilitate a rapport between the practitioner and the Virgin Mary. This relationship, the *Liber visionum* promises, will culminate in the devotee gaining knowledge of the seven liberal arts, receiving enhanced faculties of memory and eloquence, and ultimately possessing the ability to conjure visions.[1] These visions, the text that records them, their author, and the mental and physical context of their surroundings are the subject of this thesis. The creator of this text, John of Morigny, was a Benedictine monk at the monastery of Morigny, educated both at Chartres as well as Orleans.[2] While at Morigny in 1304, John

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[1] This historical overview is largely recreated for the reader through the help of the scholarship of Claire Fanger and Nicholas Watson, taken from their introduction to the prologue to the *Liber Visionum*. Claire Fanger and Nicolas Watson, trans., "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*: Translation and Text," *Esoterica* 3 (2001), 109-25.

[2] John calls himself the "compiler" of the text, having been inspired by the Virgin Mary through ecstatic visions; however, as one sees in the prologue to the *Liber Visionum*, he creates most of the prayers himself and extracts a large part of the data from the *Ars Notoria*, a condemned necromantic text, which does ultimately make him the compiler. To learn more on the necromancy in the *Ars Notoria* and John's role as compiler see Claire Fanger's article, "Plundering the Egyptian Treasure: John the Monk's Book of Visions and its Relation to the Ars Notoria of Solomon," in *Conjuring Spirits: Texts and Traditions of Medieval and Ritual Magic*, Claire Fanger, ed., (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 1998), 216-50.

His schooling at Chartres is unconfirmed, but Fanger and Watson believe that John's intimate knowledge of Chartres as well as his placement in this town at the beginning of the *thema* indicate that he could have been a child of the alb. At Chartres the children of the alb were located just some twenty meters from the northern transept. This group of children interacted daily with the Augustinian canons of the Cathedral, singing,

began writing the *Liber visionum*, adding to it in stages until 1317. The *Liber visionum* illustrates John's experience with the *Ars Notoria*,[3] a condemned necromantic text that claims to provide the practitioner with knowledge of the liberal arts and, subsequently, the ability to have visions. John's assumption of the *Ars Notoria's* content into the *Liber visionum* is his attempt to resolve the heretical nature of the *Ars Notoria*; thus, in effect, the *Liber Visionum* becomes John's version of an "orthodox" *Ars Notoria*.

The *Liber visionum* is divided into three main books: the prologue, the *Liber virginis marie*, and the *Liber figurarum*. In them John presents two interrelated methods for obtaining a connection with the Virgin. The first system, described in the *Liber virginis marie,* is an almost exact appropriation of the *Ars Notoria*. This approach accesses general knowledge of the seven liberal arts and the other faculties, mimicking the content of the Ars Notoria while utilizing a slightly different structure. Claire Fanger notes that parts II and III of this system, which involve general and specific prayers to the Virgin Mary that can be used to extract information on both the liberal arts and other concerns, correspond almost verbatim with the first and second parts of the *Ars Notoria*.[4] John diverges from the template set forth by the *Ars Notoria* only in his first section of prayers, which follow John's personal experience of petitioning the Virgin. All these prayers described in the first two books involve gestures with accompanying exercises for

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praying, and reading with the canons while also ministering to them. Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 207.

[3] The *Ars Notoria* is a specific text but had many variants and seems to have been published as a rudimentary text for knowledge acquisition. Little is known about the *Ars Notoria* and research is forthcoming, spearheaded by scholars like Claire Fanger, in an attempt to help medieval scholars understand this magical text.

[4] Claire Fanger, "Plundering the Egyptian Treasure," 220.

purification and fasting. In addition, to supplement the prayers and exercises, there are *figurae* – or diagrams – which were collated to compose a separately classified section of the *Liber visionum*, contained in the third book which John calls the *Liber figurarum*.

The *Liber figurarum* constitutes the second system of the *Liber visionum*, and works in tandem with the prayers and exercises of the first system. While praying or executing the other requirements of the *Liber visionum*, the practitioners used imagery, mostly figures of the Virgin Mary or the planets, to focus their devotions and lead them into contemplation. Contemplation would eventually culminate in an ecstatic experience in which practitioners would receive some type of information. At the novice level this revelation would most likely have been a general understanding of a liberal art. At the advanced level, however, one could elicit specific information from the Virgin Mary. Thus at the most sophisticated levels, the *Liber visionum* became a method by which one could, with some consistency and relative ease, engage in mystical visions. This methodology does not differ greatly from that of the *Ars Notoria*, yet as one begins to analyze John's prologue, it becomes apparent that John and the practitioners of the *Ars Notoria* do not employ the same intercessory mediators, the beings who enable them to receive ecstatic visions.

John's prologue developed at a critical point in the creation of the *Liber visionum*. In 1313, while writing the *Liber figurarum* to supplement the *Liber virginis marie*, John began composing the prologue, a narrative account of the visions that led him to create the *Liber visionum*. John had gone through the correct channels for divine revelation; his *figurae* consisted largely of images accepted within Christian dogma and he had the

support of his fellow brothers at Morigny.[5] Even so, John predicted a problem of such magnitude that he felt he must explicate the text of the *Liber visionum* with an *apologia* in the form of the prologue.

Within the community of John's intended readers there existed a populace that, having practiced it, was very familiar with the *Ars Notoria*; their experiences, however, had made this constituency highly uncomfortable with its effects.[6] John was aware of this community because he, like them, had been injured by the *Ars Notoria's* malevolent results. One of the intended results of practicing the *Ars Notoria* was to gain visionary aptitude, yet the *Ars Notoria* provoked demonic visions of terrifying proportions.[7] "Truly, truly, inexplicable is the figure of demons," John had cried during one of his most intense visions while practicing the *Ars Notoria*.[8] In the prologue John directly addresses readers who may have been skeptical of or, worse, horrified by the *Ars Notoria*, hoping to put some distance between readers' familiarity with that text and what John would propose in the *Liber visionum*:

> And therefore those of you who are and have been deceived in it [the *Ars Notoria*] and through it, bear the alien gods from your midst. Turn yourselves to the lord God with your whole heart, and to his glorious and undefiled mother, the Virgin Mary. Ask and seek from them in the faith through the present art what you

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[5] For the text detailing the approval of the monks at Morigny see, John of Morigny, *Liber figurarum* (Oxford, Bodley Library, MS liturg. 160, c. 1400. Cited in e-mail dated February 26, 2005, from Claire Fanger.

[6] They, like John, constituted what Richard Kieckhefer would call "the clerical underworld," a group of religiously affiliated people who were well versed in magic of all sorts. Richard Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 151-56.

[7] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 114-15.

[8] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 176.

> sought before, when you were deceived through that other reprobate art, outside the faith, from the devil and his minions…[9]

Those "alien gods," those demons that attacked and tormented John while he was practicing the *Ars Notoria*, would have affected his audience as well. Thus, the overwhelming similarities to the *Ars Notoria* present within the *Liber visionum* would have presented a problem for those readers who had experienced the torment that the *Ars Notoria* had provoked. In John's prologue, he even adds accounts of the demonic visions experienced by his sister, Gurgeta, and another monk, to remind readers of the horror inflicted by the *Ars Notoria*. John's audience was in dire need of reassurance that his text would be nothing like the *Ars Notoria*, and it was for this reason that John saw fit to recount his own visionary experiences with the *Ars Notoria* in the prologue, counterbalancing those with the beatific visions which inspired the *Liber visionum*.

The audience had to be reassured, not only that John had seemingly benign visions while practicing the *Liber visionum*, but also that these visions were legitimate and that they came from an honest and sincere place. Therefore, when John employs the Virgin Mary he does so to provide a legitimate source that was lacking in the methodology of the *Ars Notoria*. There are, however, problems inherent with this device. John describes in the prologue how the devil sometimes feigns the appearance of the Virgin Mary, confusing practitioners.[10] Thus, to foil the trickery of the devil, John gives readers the following advice: "Satan can never appear alone in a church or another holy

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[9] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 199.
[10] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 204.

place – rather the blessed Virgin will appear."[11] Following this advice, practitioners should always check for a church in their visions, for it authenticates the experience.

This advice not only applies to practitioners' visions, it pertains directly to John's as well – it becomes the tool by which readers could assess the legitimacy of John's visions. This was crucial for those readers who had been deceived by the *Ars Notoria*. John's visions provide readers with their first glimpse of the visionary experience under the auspices of the *Liber visionum*. Yet, John's visions do not simply legitimize the text; they too, function like the *Liber visionum* and provoke divine revelation. As John tells his readers, "in each vision a figure or mystery is always discovered."[12]

Through these visions, John presents the church – as both general concept and specific monument embodied in Chartres cathedral – to the reader as his legitimizing device, for it was through this object that mysteries are revealed and explained. A setting for John's beatific visions, the church extends its legitimacy to his spiritual experience, validating John's visions through its visual rhetoric. When his audience reads the name of the church its members see its physical manifestation. Thus, the prologue becomes three-dimensional and is transformed into an experience that extends beyond the boundaries of the two-dimensional page. John's visions are no longer confined to his visual repository, or memory; now they are shared by the practitioners. The church becomes a place within the text where all eyes rest and see in the most profound sense of the word. It is place that can provoke mental imaging on a large scale and provide legitimacy to a text. It can only function effectively, however, if there is in each individual a vivid recollection of the

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[11] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 204
[12] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 169.

place that evokes thoughts of legitimacy. In John's prologue, then, he utilizes Chartres Cathedral because it resonates with visual connotations, literary implications, and miraculous affirmations. It is here in the visual rhetoric of Chartres Cathedral's architecture, sculpture, and ritual that John ultimately sought to assure his reader and it is this process of mental and physical revelation that my thesis addresses.

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When working with the *Liber visionum*, I have used two versions, the Bodley manuscript, (Oxford, Bodley Library, MS liturg. 160), and the Graz manuscript, (Graz, University Library 680). The Bodley text is representative of the Old Composition, dating to before 1315, and does not include the *cogitationes* – prayers that provoke visualizations of Christ and the Virgin Mary in dogmatic scenes like the Incarnation – that the manuscript at Graz contains. The Graz manuscript is representative of the New Compilation, which was created around 1315 in response to certain "barking dogs" at Sens, namely the archbishop.[13] In this version of the *Liber Visionum*, the *figurae* that were said to be present in the *Liber figurarum* of the Old Compilation are reduced and the *cogitationes* are inserted *Liber virginis marie*. In my study of the *Liber visionum* I analyze the sections that were present in both the Old Compilation and the New Compilation: the prologue and the *Liber figurarum*. In chapter two, I discuss very briefly the *cogitationes* that were inserted into the New Compilation, but only to highlight the inherently visual quality of the words already expressed in the *Liber figurarum*, which

[13] In an e-mail dated February 26, 2005, Claire Fanger informed me that the archbishop of Sens criticized the Old Compilation on grounds of its necromantic *figurae*. This was the same man, Philippe de Marigny, who condemned the Templars to death just one year earlier in 1310.

was included in the Old Compilation. I believe that the New Compilation does not change the breadth of the *Liber visionum*, nor drastically change the intended audience. John is still speaking to his peers while attempting to appease a rather disgruntled archbishop.

John's need to speak to, confide in, and convince his audience fueled the creation of the prologue of the *Liber visionum*. My thesis develops alongside John's formation of the prologue, providing insight into the responses he wanted to elicit from his audience. John persuades his audience through a written recount, yet as the prologue unravels it is transformed, morphing from a predominately literal, literary experience, to a mystical visionary encounter. My thesis seeks to recreate this transformation for the reader emphasizing the reader's response and John's intentions.

The first chapter establishes the need for a legitimizing device within the *Liber visionum*, expiating upon how John and his reader understood legitimacy. The second chapter expounds upon the inherently visual nature of the prologue as a legitimizing device, concentrating on the medieval conception of collective memory, which enables John's audience to experience the visuality of the text. Through his usage of Chartres Cathedral, John's text becomes a repository of shared memories. In the second chapter, Chartres Cathedral is analyzed as a cognitive tool within John's text, one that takes visual representation and transforms the image into a cognitive image. The first two chapters are literary analyses of the prologue, John's deliberate usages of words to elicit certain connotations are analyzed within the scope of the medieval world. From this firm literary standpoint the other chapters emerge since it is from the word seen as symbol that the

prologue launches into a visual exploration of artistic representations of the word. The third, fourth, and fifth chapters recreate the mental imaging induced through John's usage of Chartres Cathedral as a cognitive tool. The third chapter concentrates on both the historical precedent of mental imagining within the medieval world as well as the precedent set by John in other sections of the *Liber visionum*. Within the third chapter, the *thema* is analyzed extensively as an example of mental imaging, emphasizing the rhetoric of the text that leads the mind into visual conceptualizations. The fourth chapter recreates John's circumambulation of Chartres Cathedral, focusing on historical, allegorical, and anagogical interpretations of the structure within the context of the prologue. The fifth chapter explores the interior of Chartres and the history of the miraculous occurrence therein. It is my intention in these three chapters to present a medieval reading of Chartres Cathedral that would have resonated with John's audience. From the *Liber visionum* they would have extracted an understanding of John's usage of the cathedral, and thus, as I argue overall, their understanding would in turn have legitimized the *Liber visionum*.

My discussion of John's *Liber visionum* addresses its visionary capacity from both a literary and an art historical standpoint. Although Michael Camille has explored the visuality of the *Liber visionum* and the *Ars Notoria* using an art historical lens, he has focused primarily on the *figurae*, arguing for their capacity to connect the practitioner to the divine. I am indebted to his discussion. In the present work, however, I attempt to extend his thesis to the words of the prologue, recreating their ability to transcend the page and connect the viewer to the divine. Furthermore, I envision the words, specifically

when referring to Chartres, as being part of a visual repository that does not transport the practitioners into a "blind" experience of the divine, comparable to an ecstatic visionary experience, but one that enables them to peruse the visual manifestations of the divine on earth in attempt to discover the mystical meanings of the world and John's text.

It is exciting to experience John's text as a visual repository. His understanding and usage of the words in the prologue provide the art historian with a new sets of tools to analyze the medieval visual world. More importantly, John's usage of Chartres allows the art historian to experience afresh, and perhaps reevaluate, the varied ways in which the cathedral's structure was used in the Middles Ages. The art historian can hear Suger's words above the cathedral door of St. Denis resonate with clarity in John's usage of Chartres Cathedral: "The noble work shines, but the noble work gleams, Let it make minds so shine that they may pass through true lights, To the true light where Christ is the true door."[14] The anagogical experience that Gothic architecture inspired was never lost in translation. The medieval audience always recuperated and received its meanings – John's work is a testament to this fact.

[14] Barbara Nolan, *The Gothic Visionary Perspective* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977) 48. Cited from Abbot Suger, *De administratione*, XXXVII, PL XCIV, 1229.

IV. Chapter One: Authoring A Vision: Establishing the Pretenses of Legitimacy in the *Liber Visionum*

The modern reader approaches John of Morigny's *Liber visionum* with a certain number of presuppositions, representing his or her expectations of a text. In order to maintain the integrity of the *Liber visionum* and preserve its written intentions, the reader must shed modern conceptions and attempt to assume medieval predilections. Modern concerns regarding the *Liber visionum* are, nevertheless, pertinent. The text is problematic for both modern and medieval readers; for the first group the *Liber visionum* represents a fictitiously innocuous manual of devotion, and for the other, its pages recreated the horror of past errors in necromancy.

Thus it is in their perception of the text that the modern and medieval viewer clash. Despite their differences, there is, for both audiences, a feeling of mistrust and therefore a prevailing doubt about the sincerity of the *Liber visionum's* claims. In order to counteract the effects of doubt, there must exist some type of vindication. The form this vindication takes is contingent upon the audience; therefore, although modern readers assume a stance of suspiciousness and understand the need to justify the *Liber visionum*, the form the vindication takes is outside of modern cultural norms as it is directed at a medieval audience. Hence, in John's journey, modern readers must remain aware of John's audience. It is to this audience and the methods by which John established a legitimate persona as a visionary through the evocation of *auctoritas* in the *Liber visionum* that I now turn.

John was writing for a community of monks who were very familiar with the genre of scholastic magic. The monks believed in the immediate functionality of "magic,"[15] and insisted that it pervaded even into scholastic endeavors, improving certain intellectual faculties of the mind.[16] They were familiar with texts like the *Ars Notoria*, and read John's *Liber visionum*; they saw them as plausible venues for knowledge acquisition. Thus, the modern readers should not doubt the medieval readers' belief in magic or the efficacy of acquiring knowledge through these means, but instead should evaluate John's text according to how this knowledge was achieved through legitimate – even divine – routes. It was the merit of the process that concerned the medieval readers, not the fact of it. Thus, in order to vindicate the *Liber visionum*, John had to reassure the readers of the positive nature of his method.

It is through the prologue of the *Liber visionum* that John hopes to instill this belief in the orthodoxy of his process. The prologue is a first person narrative account of visions; it describes John's personal journey through the torment of the *Ars Notoria* and into the bliss of the *Liber visionum*. The narrative resembles an autobiography in its

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[15] Magic here is a very strong word because it holds with it certain modern connotations of flights of fancy or illusions. However, for the medieval practitioner of magic or even those who condemned it like St. Augustine in the *City of God* and St. Thomas of Aquinas in volume forty-one of his *Summa Theologiae*, there is an overwhelming idea of magic as a real force in the medieval world. The term also has the tendency of being exaggerated here, as John and his fellow monks would not have seen this scholastic magic, as malign or demonic but rather a system that is very similar, in their conception of it, to orthodox ideas of personal devotion. For further information on scholastic magic see, Michael D. Swartz, *Scholastic Magic: Ritual and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 209-31.

[16] Just by reading John's text the reader sees that there existed a community who believed in the merits of magic for scholastic as well as mystical purposes, such as conjuring visions. See, Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 114-15.

informal tone and nominal or first person identity. The medieval understanding of the first person narrative translates well into modern society – in both there is a belief in the sanctity and objective truth of the autobiography.[17]

In Laurence de Looze's work on the pseudo-biography of the fourteenth century, he notes that the author's life is both the reason for creating the book as well as the authenticating, authorizing force behind it.[18] However de Looze asserts that nominal identity was withheld from the reader, who determined from the narrative, and not prior knowledge of the author, whether he was sincere in his intentions. If the author's recounting of his life was believable, then the *reader* considered the text an autobiography. The medieval reader was therefore an active and essential ingredient in the author's writing process.

In his prologue John adheres to these "truthful" ideals, taking a convincing autobiographical tone. As de Looze illustrates, however, it is the reader of John's prologue who determines whether the text is autobiographical or not, truthful or false. The genre of the autobiography was not legitimate in itself. For the medieval reader, John's claims made through the "truthful" style had to be evaluated and then the text could be conferred the title of an "autobiography." Thus, in order to convince his peers of the personal nature, and therefore the legitimacy, of the *Liber visionum*, John carefully constructs a prologue that employs familiar persuasive rhetoric that concurs with a

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[17] Laurence de Looze, *Pseudo-Autobiography in the Fourteenth Century* (Tallahassee: University of Florida Press, 1997), 1-43.
[18] Laurence de Looze, *Pseudo-Autobiography in the Fourteenth Century*, 6.

historically orthodox tradition. For his constituency that suspects the sincerity of his visions, John portrays himself as a visionary of merit.

An undeniably orthodox source for John is medieval exegesis. The legitimacy created in exegesis derives mostly from *auctoritas*, the citation of respected *auctors*. Saints, evangelists, and church fathers were highly revered for their genuineness and given the title *auctors* as a mark of prestige. Citations of their writings were essential to the authenticity of an exegeist's work. Although John's work does not entail exegetical work on a grand scale, he does rely on *auctoritas* to establish a historically valid precedent for his visions in the prologue. John frequently interweaves *auctoritas* throughout his prologue, creating a matrix of subtle and flagrant associations that work on multiple levels of medieval biblical interpretation.

The well established and widely accepted fourfold method of interpretation, provides insight into how the medieval reader would have analyzed John's usage of *auctoritas*. Guilbert of Nogent, a twelfth-century Benedictine monk of St. Geremar Abbey, explains the fourfold theory of interpreting scripture in his *Commentary on the Book of Genesis*:

> There are four ways of interpreting the Scripture; on them, as though on so many scrolls, each sacred page is rolled. The first is history, which speaks of actual events as they occurred; the second is allegory, in which one thing stands for something else; the third is tropology, or moral instruction, which treats of the ordering and arranging of one's life; and the last is aesthetics or spiritual enlightenment, through which we who are about to treat of lofty and heavenly topics are led to a higher way of life. For example, the word Jerusalem: historically, it represents a specific city; in allegory it represents the holy Church; tropologically, or morally it is the soul of every faithful man who longs for the vision of eternal peace; and analogically it refers to the life of the heavenly citizens, who already see the God of Gods…Granted that all four of these methods of interpretation are valid and can be used, either together or? singly, yet

> the most appropriate and prudent for use in matters referring to the lives of men seems to be the moral approach.[19]

All biblical text could be dissected in this fashion, extracting valuable elements of knowledge from single words, verses, or entire chapters, thereby creating a plethora of interpretations. In his example, Gilbert quells the preacher's urge to overwhelm the lay audience with complex multi-layered interpretations, endorsing a moralistic approach instead. However, Guilbert does allow an exception for the clergy, permitting both allegorical and anagogical interpretations: "The last is aesthetics or spiritual enlightenment, through which we who are about to treat of lofty and heavenly topics are led to a higher way of life."[20] It was through this lens of anagogical and allegorical interpretation that the invisible, spiritual meaning of scripture could be comprehended.

Guilbert of Nogent's explanation of the fourfold method demonstrates the level of analysis that the reader of the *Liber visionum* would have conducted. A historical interpretation was preliminary in analyzing John's *auctoritas*, for it provided the basic context in which the reader could evaluate John's citation. Recognizing the *auctoritas* within the dogma of medieval Catholicism led to contemplation of its implications – an allegorical interpretation – in John's text. John's rhetoric is enriched with *auctoritas*, which aids in legitimizing his assertions.

In defending himself from those who would deem him unworthy of receiving the revelation of the *Liber visionum*, such as the archbishop of Sens, John rebuts, stating:

> Were there not twelve apostles? And yet nobody saw arcana except Paul—

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[19] Joseph Miller, *Readings in Medieval Rhetoric* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1973), 171.
[20] Miller, *Readings in Medieval Rhetoric*, 171.

> John being the most beloved among the rest. Was it said to Peter alone concerning him, "So I want him to remain, what is that to you?" And if Peter does not deserve to know this, in what way do we? But as Paul said, "Lest the abundance of revelations exalt me, a thorn in the flesh was given me, the messenger of Satan to buffet me." Likewise there was given to me not only a thorn in the flesh, but also urges to sins of every kind, so that I would not exalt myself.[21]

John justifies his visionary capabilities with an adamant and reproachful tone – perhaps an indication that these words were directed to an antagonistic audience. At the same time, this reference to Paul would have resonated well with his audience of former *Ars Notoria* practitioners who, indeed, had been buffeted by messengers of Satan and who may have felt vindicated in their actions while reading John's assertion. The story that John weaves in this excerpt is largely extrapolated from Corinthians II 12:1-7 with the exception of Christ's rebuff to Peter which is narrated in John 21:23. John of Morigny uses St. Paul's *auctoritas* not only to vindicate his visionary experience but also to project an image of himself as the worthy disciple, St. Paul, within the context of the prologue. John's appropriation of St. Paul's *auctoritas* is open to a plethora of interpretations; however, to gain a dogmatic medieval viewpoint the reader must consult the standard interpretation, which derives from the father *par excellence* of exegesis, St. Augustine.

In his treatise, *On Genesis*, St. Augustine provides the medieval stance on Corinthians II 12 1-4, addressing the visionary ascent of St. Paul. In order to understand Augustine's exegesis, a citation of Corinthians II 12: 1-4 is appropriate:

> It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: I know a man in Christ who 14 years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of body I do not know, God only knows— such a one

[21] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 169.

> was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows— how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

In his exegesis, St. Augustine begins by deconstructing Paul's vision by first questioning the significance of the third heaven.[22] St. Augustine suggests that in order to understand the third heaven, readers must understand the contents and circumstances of the apostle's vision. He addresses the circumstance first, quoting St. Paul's ambiguous statement: "I know a man in Christ fourteen years ago, whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God only knows – such a one was snatched up to the third heaven."[23] In interpreting this statement, St. Augustine outlines the different types of states under which St. Paul could have envisioned the third heaven. He explains that both "in the body" and "out of the body" experiences express the varying levels of visionary awareness of outside stimuli and thus involve different states of cognizance. For instance, Augustine explains that the sleeper who is in the body cannot be "led a pretty dance by the images of bodies, as if they really were the bodies themselves,"[24] the dreamer knows that the images he sees are under the pretenses of a dream and are representations of bodily images. Thus, the dreamer is open to the bodily sensation of vision and can envision bodily or corporeal images. In contrast, for one to have an "out of body" experience, one must be alienated from all senses and "see" through the soul. When seeing through the soul one does not rely on corporeal images. In St. Augustine's

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[22] St. Augustine, *On Genesis: A Refutation of the Manichees Unfinished Literal Commentary on Genesis*, Edmund Hill, trans., (New York: New York City Press, 1990), 464.
[23] Corinthians II 12:2.
[24] St. Augustine, *On Genesis*, 466.

explanation of the different states of the visionary experience, he applies value to the different states, preferring an "out of body" experience, which he argues St. Paul experienced, to an "in the body" experience. However, as readers encounter later, when John of Morigny employs the Pauline trope "in the body or out of the body, I do not know" it is to confuse the reader's interpretation of his visions. Although John describes himself as usually waking up after having a vision, implying that he was dreaming and therefore still "in the body", one can interpret the inclusion of the *auctoritas* of the Pauline caveat as a refutation of this conclusion, for even Paul himself did not know in which state he had received his visions. This tension between John's story and his utilization of Augustine and Paul to gain legitimacy reflects the problematic evaluation of John as a mystic or a visionary. Nevertheless, St. Augustine's commentary on St. Paul's state when ascending to the third heaven provides insight into John's conception of himself as well as his notions of the power of vision.

Later in his exegesis, St. Augustine describes the three types of visions: bodily, spiritual, and intellectual as they manifest themselves in St. Paul's ascent as well as how they pervade medieval life. St. Augustine maps out a three-fold ascent for St. Paul asserting that in each level of his ascent he saw with a different type of vision. The first level of heaven was perceived physically through the senses. The second heaven was seen spiritually without the need of the bodily senses. This necessitated the bodily vision imprinting a corporeal image onto the memory and therefore allowing the mind to produce a spiritual vision in absence of a material one. The third heaven was seen through the intellect in which visual representation is not needed and pure understanding

is apprehended through the mind. Thus, when St. Paul states, "he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter," Augustine assumes that these "inexpressible words" were from a vision of the third heaven facilitated by intellectual vision.

In St. Augustine's interpretation, each vision – bodily, spiritual, and intellectual – is hierarchically dependent on the other. St. Augustine extends this methodology to medieval vision, describing the process with his interpretation of Mark 12:31: "you shall love your neighbor as yourself":

> The letters are seen with bodily vision, the neighbor thought about spiritually, love observed intellectually. But when the letters are not in front of you they can also be thought of spiritually, and when your neighbor is present he can be seen with bodily vision, while love in its proper nature can neither be discerned with the eye of the body, nor thought about in spirit by means of an image resembling a body, but only known and perceived by the mind, that is, the intellect.[25]

St. Augustine articulates with precision how one "climbs" from one level of vision to another, suggesting that images already imprinted on the mind could send one into further exploration of those things not comprehended through visual representation such as love. Thus, St. Augustine does not limit bodily and intellectual vision to the apostle, but extends its possibilities to all. In John's appropriation of St. Paul's *auctoritas* he claims the ability of vision that St. Augustine has made available. This assumption of the role of visionary, in fact, places John into a league of visionaries where St. Paul was the prototype.

With St. Paul leading the way, John envisions himself as his natural and worthy predecessor. John strikes correlations between his life and St. Paul's, specifically citing

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[25] St. Augustine, *On Genesis,* 475.

the passage where St. Paul is honored with the ability to see *arcana*, even though St. John was the most beloved by Christ. It was well known in the Middle Ages why St. Paul was not the most loved for he was a convert who had persecuted Christians as a Jew, and then later converted to Christianity, embracing the faith he had once condemned.[26] In Galatians 1:12 St. Paul relays the particulars of his conversion quite clearly, defending himself from the Galatians suspicions of his sincerity: "For I neither received it [the gospel] from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through revelation of Jesus Christ." Faced with the same suspicious attitudes that confront those who have converted, both John and St. Paul insist that a divinity converted them to their faith, and that their knowledge was received directly from them, bypassing the uncertainty and unreliability of man's words. They both divert suspiciousness by conceding their authority to a higher power and dismissing the faulty authority of other men. It is clear that John wants to be considered the new Paul by his audience, for he too had been converted from the demonic *Ars Notoria*, to the *Liber visionum*, inspired by none other than the Virgin herself.[27] By adopting this mantle John could justify his ability to receive visions and decision to convert from a condemned practice. His conversion is a means of encouragement to his audience who sought the same type of redemption in their practicing of the *Liber visionum*.

St. Paul's *auctoritas* set the stage for John's visions; it provides a historically valid precedent for John's usage of them. However, St. Paul's *auctoritas* alone could not

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[26] C. J. Den Heyer, *Paul: A Man of Two Worlds* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2000), 50-51.
[27] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 205-06.

validate John's visions. Thus, in order to obtain an approval of autobiographical legitimacy from his audience, John's visions had to employ another legitimizing device within the visions themselves. The readers discover this device through other modules of seeing and analyzing text and image, ones that enable the readers to internalize and personalize John's journey. This fused usage of memory and visions, and their physical form in manuscript and architecture, are the subject of the next three chapters.

V. Chapter Two: In the Recess of the Mind: Communal Memory in the Prologue of the *Liber visionum*

John was a man of reflection. In 1313, amidst his fervent writing and revising of the two systems of the *Liber visionum*, he took time to analyze the effectiveness of both approaches, to address the concerns of his audience, and as a result he composed the prologue. To his credit, the creation of the prologue was not an easy task. John sought to present in narrative form his visions that occurred while he was practicing the *Ars Notoria* as well as while he was constructing the *Liber visionum*, all of which spanned over at least fifteen years.[28] In being able to recall such distant memories, it tells us that John was in the rut of remembering. Although he would assert that his memory was efficient through practice of the *Liber visionum*, John still had to remember, in the active and disciplined way of the medieval mind, the content of his visions.

The challenge of recollecting these memories was a feat that could be successively and accurately executed (as far as medieval theories were concerned) through a very conscious cognitive process. An example of this process is described at great length by the church father, St. Augustine, in Book X of his *Confessions*.[29]

> Yet if for quite short periods of time I cease to recollect them [images], then again they sink below the surface and slip away into remote recesses, so that they have to be thought out as if they were quite new, drawn again from the same store (for there is nowhere else for them to go). Once again they have to be brought together (cogenda) so as to be capable of being known; that means they have to be

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[28] John had received his first vision fifteen years before in 1298. Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 112.
[29] Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 198.

> gathered (colligenda) from their dispersed state. Hence is derived the word cogitate.[30]

John might have found a friend in St. Augustine; they were in the same predicament, struggling to recall information that had not been accessed in a long time. St. Augustine narrates very efficiently a process that required a certain amount of mental agility. For the educated medieval person, recapturing information involved *collectio*, the act of gathering "images." The elusive word "images" comes from a medieval conception of how one actually remembered something.[31] As described by St. Augustine, the act of *collectio* made one instantly cognizant of information formerly hidden; however, St. Augustine's description of this process presents medieval *collectio* as if it were a quick reflex of the mind, which is not a truly accurate summation of this form of medieval cognition. The efficient retrieval of "images" relied on an intricate process of remembering which began with primary sensory interactions.[32] Again, St. Augustine was one of the chief authorities in explaining the primary bases of sense perception and their connection to memory.

In Book X of his *Confessions*, St. Augustine speaks frequently about how the memory preserves "images":

> Memory's huge cavern, with its mysterious, secret, and indescribable nooks and crannies, receives all these perceptions [sight, sound, touch, smell], to be recalled when needed and reconsidered. Every one of them enters into memory, each by its own gate, and is put on deposit there. The objects themselves do not enter, but the images of the perceived objects are available to the thought recalling them.[33]

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[30] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, Henry Chadswick, trans., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 189.
[31] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 198.
[32] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, 185-88.
[33] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, 186.

St. Augustine presents a concept of the senses as conduits to the vast cave of memory. He is cautious in stating that, although the actual object is experienced through the senses, the object itself does not enter into memory; rather, a likeness of the object is impressed upon the memory for retention. St. Augustine's language is reminiscent of his rhetoric when describing the three types of visions in *On Genesis* which I discussed above in more detail in chapter one. The first type of vision is perceived through the senses and is known as bodily vision, while the second is anything that one can "see" in the absence of the corporeal image, called spiritual vision. Thus, in summation, the memory retains the "image" first experienced by the senses and then facilitates spiritual vision by performing *collectio*, recalling the "image" in absence of the corporeal. St. Augustine establishes with great clarity the process of how images are formed within the memory; however, he does not give the reader a concrete explanation of how these "images" are actively, consciously retained in the memory in order to make possible later the act of *collectio,* or, in the Augustinian sense, spiritual, vision. In order to understand this crucial level of remembering that John of Morigny would have actively employed in his recollection of visions, one has to look before the foundations of Christianity and study classical conceptions of cognition and memory.

In *The Book of Memory* Mary Carruthers singles out the classical texts, Cicero's *De oratore*, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, and Quintilian's *Institutio,* as the foundations for late medieval and Renaissance conceptions of memory.[34] Each of these texts expounds upon the theory of an "architectural mnemonic," as coined by Carruthers. The

[34] Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 122-55.

theory is most thoroughly realized in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, which dates to the first century B. C. There, the unknown author describes a vivid architectural scheme for remembering "images." The text suggests that to create an effective storehouse for memory one must have a "background:"

> By backgrounds I mean such scenes as are naturally or artificially set off on a small scale, complete and conspicuous, so that we can grasp and embrace them easily by the natural memory—for example, a house, an intercolumnar space, a recess, an arch, or the like.[35]

It was also suggested that this background be a place that was well-lit, not too crowded, of manageable size, and distinguishable from other backgrounds, since one would employ specific types of backgrounds to "store" specific types of information.[36] After the background was created, "images" were then projected onto them.

> An image is, as it were, a figure, mark, or portrait of the image we wish to remember.[37] Likeness of matter are formed when we enlist images that present a general view of the matter with which we are dealing.[38]

In these two passages the author explains the subtle malleability of "images." As implied in the first definition of "images," these were to be "portraits" or symbols of the information being remembered. One could use this system to recall "words" (*memoria verborum*), often reserved for children's exercises, or 'things" (*memorium rerum*).

The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* fluctuated in popularity in the Middle Ages, gaining significant attention in the thirteenth century when it was espoused by Albertus Magnus

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[35] *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, Harry Caplan, trans., (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 209.
[36] Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 72.
[37] *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 209.
[38] *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 215.

and St. Thomas Aquinas.[39] By the fourteenth century, Thomas Bradwardine, a prominent English theologian, considered the architectural mnemonic a part of elementary education.[40] These authors added new aspects to the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*'s methodology. Nonetheless, the underlying basis of the architectural mnemonic remained constant: "images" and "backgrounds" were to be vividly visual. Thus, exploring one's memory that was trained to use the architectural mnemonic became an intense exercise in mental visualization.

With the deliberate nature of architectural mnemonics thus explicated, we can now posit the nature of John's creative process.[41] His performance of *collectio*, searching in the vastness of his "backgrounds" and gathering the "images" that represented his visions, reveals the conscious effort John put forth in creating his prologue. Remembering, for John, is not an act that happens unconsciously like a reflex, but is rather a highly involved and disciplined action. Thus, for John, selecting visions is a highly premeditated act. These visions would serve as a tool of rhetoric, made for a receptive and responding audience, who, once thoroughly convinced by his rhetorical visionary choices, would agree to the auspiciousness of the *Liber visionum* and thus deem it legitimate. Viewed in this manner, John's visions in his prologue cannot be seen as his

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[39] Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 122-54. It should be noted that Thierry of Chartres was of the first theologians to accept some of the premises of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. He gives significant space to the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*'s discourse on memory in his commentary on the text. John's interest in the memory arts gives me more reason to believe that John would have come in contact with the art as a child of the alb. See chapter three for my discussion of Thierry of Chartres as a model for John.

[40] Carruthers, *Book of Memory,* 135-37.

[41] John was most likely taught the "architectural mnemonic" as a noviate. The increased popularity of the architectural mnemonic in the thirteenth century extended well into the Renaissance. Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 122-54.

alone; they were designed to engage the members of his audience, cementing their investment in the narrative, and sparking memories of their own. The visions' effectiveness hinged upon a communal memory that connected John to his readers.

At the center of communal memory is a dichotomy between memory as both individual and collective. In her book, *The Craft of Thought*, Mary Carruthers addresses this issue:

> Because it builds entirely through the associations made in some individual's mind, memory work has an irreducibly personal and private or 'secret' dimension to it. At the same time, because most of its building materials are common to all—are in fact common places—memory work is also fully social and political, a truly civic activity. The constant balance of individual and communal, ethos and pathos, is adjusted and engineered with the tools of rhetoric: images and figures, topics and schemes.[42]

The common place that Carruthers refers to is, in medieval cognition, a place of departure, one that is known by a body of people yet provokes *collectio* within each individual that gives rise to similar remembered "images." John introduces an element of communal memory in his *thema*, his vision that anticipates the course of the narrative, which is sustained throughout the course of his prologue:

> When I John, was about fourteen years old and lived in the city of Chartres in the close of the blessed Mary, very close to the church, about a stone's throw away, this vision was shown to me as one born out of due time. On a certain night I was placed in a kind of ecstasy, whether in the body or out of the body I know not, God knows. And lo, I saw a certain horrible figure, and it seemed to me absolutely certain that it was the enemy of the human race. And that figure rose up against me, wishing and craving to suffocate me. When I saw it I fled aghast in great fear from its terrible face, and it pursued me hither and thither, and could not catch me, and yet pressed upon me as it followed, so that I left the house I was in fleeing from the face of my persecutor. And when I went outside it did not cease to follow me; and when it rose up hugely I stopped in my tracks and ran towards

[42] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 21.

> the church of the blessed Mary. I entered it through the right hand door of the main entrance on the west front, and when I was in the church…[43]

There are many elements of the description that dramatically leap out at the reader from the text. It reads like a perfect synopsis of Augustine's discourse on St. Paul's ascent in *On Genesis*. For instance, John carefully notes his proximity to the cathedral, implying an intimate knowledge of Chartres that later informs his vision of the cathedral. This correlates directly with St. Augustine's thoughts on bodily visions that lead to spiritual visions. The link that Augustine was missing between bodily and spiritual visions – and the aspect that John cleverly manipulates – is memory. John understands the importance of memory in recalling information for later usage.[44] In fact, he relays to the reader later in the *thema* that, "in my heart I commended to perpetual memory the mystery of that which I saw."[45] In addition to this individual theme, the one element of the prologue that is not distinct to John's memory alone is Chartres Cathedral. As a well-known pilgrimage church, its accessibility looms over his vision as a familiar touchstone, a "common place" in the minds of the Morigny audience.[46] The cathedral stands out in John's prologue not only because it is a place where the reader could relate his experiences to those of John's,

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[43]Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 170.

[44] Carruthers gives an example of a vision of Heito of Reichenau, where, before going to bed, the Psalms and the writings of Gregory the Great are read to him. Afterwards the literature manifests itself in his dream-vision. She states that his visions, "do not come from some unanticipated divine seizure, but are built in a consciously remembered, highly literary manner." Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, 182. I believe this relates to John's exploration in his vision, as the relationship between corporeal vision and spiritual vision is explicit and alludes to a "consciously remembered" action.

[45] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 170.

[46] The abbey of Morigny was located on the outer perimeters of Etampes, relatively close to Chartres. In addition, Chartres was world-renowned as a pilgrimage church that focused on the precious relic, the *camisia sancta*, of the Virgin Mary.

but also because it is a point from which the reader could embark and join John on his journey. A mention of Chartres in the *thema* was enough to begin *collectio* in his readers, the searching of their memory for "images" relating to Chartres. John's familiarity with this process enabled him to use "images" as very efficient tools of rhetoric. That he actually uses a physical monument as part of his abstract vision adds another layer of complexity to the architectural mnemonic.

John's knowledge of the architectural mnemonic and his interlude with the *Ars Notoria* made him familiar with the potency and adaptability of images. The *Ars Notoria* presents a system of devotion that utilizes *notae* and prayers in tandem to acquire the ultimate goal of worldly knowledge. The *notae* are depicted either visually or pictorially, this distinction having first been made by Michael Camille. In his understanding of the *notae*, Camille states, "by this [pictorial versus visual] I mean that they not only make use of signs as part of their magical language, but in addition, contain figurative elements that help structure the presentation of those signs."[47] Camille explicates the difference between the pictorial and visual to a degree, but more information is needed to gather a firm conception of the *Ars Notoria's notae.*

When Camille speaks of the figural qualities of certain *notae* he is, in large part, alluding to those elements in the *notae* that form distinguishable and recognizable images, shapes that are pictorial, and provide a context for the *notae* [Fig. 1]. Camille sees elements such as angels, kings, and even doorknockers as figural elements; they are

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[47] Michael Camille, "Visual Art in the Two Manuscripts of the Ars Notoria," in *Conjuring Spirits: Texts and Traditions of Medieval Ritual Magic*, Claire Fanger, ed., (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing; University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 110-143, here 112.

readable and understood as specific objects. Purely visual *notae*, instead, employ lines, circles, and other geometrical shapes, their specific meaning indiscernible [Fig. 2]. In Camille's work on the *Ars Notoria*, he studies chiefly pictorial *notae* putting forth compelling information on how the *Ars Notoria* was used by its practitioners. His belief that the *notae* were a means of direct access to celestial powers seems accurate, yet, at their best, the *notae* communicate this when reduced to purely visual notation.

As Camille suggests when analyzing a *nota* that represents Grammar from a fourteenth-century Turin manuscript of the Ars Notoria (Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale MS E.V. 13, f.) [Fig. 3], "these shapes were not meant to be representations of grammatical ideas, but were the transcendent means by which these practical and human ideas were grasped."[48] In the visual aspects of the *notae* there is purity; one encounters no distractions from figural elements. The visual *notae* provoke within the minds of their viewer a visual blankness that is comparable only to a meditative state. A sense of the type of condition the *notae* would have elicited from their viewer can be gleaned from Robert Turner's seventeenth-century translation of the *Ars Notoria*, which scholars believe to be very similar to the medieval version due to John's description of the text and recent discoveries of medieval copies.[49] In this version of the *Ars Notoria*, the text instructs the practitioner on how to use the *notae*, encouraging the viewer to "read" the notes, looking "diligently" into them.[50] The text, deceiving in its instructions, does not imply the *notae* transmit a message that can be read by the viewer, but rather that the

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[48] Camille, "Visual Art in the Two Manuscripts of the Ars Notoria," 120.
[49] Fanger, "Plundering the Egyptian Treasure," 219.
[50] John Turner, *Ars Notoria: The Notory Art of Solomon*, Joseph H. Peterson, ed., *Esoterica* 3 (2001), 1-128, here 36.

notae alter the state of the viewer so that he transcends bounds of meditation and contemplation – traditional devotional practices – and attains direct contact with an angel, the Virgin Mary, or Christ. To have reached such a state, the viewer had to have been in ecstasy, and therefore unsusceptible to any visual stimuli.[51] The *notae* of the Ars Notoria provided the quick, clear path to ecstasy, they were visual signs that lead to another, higher world.

For John, the *Ars Notoria* set the precedent for effective vision conjuring, even though the results were malefic. Thus, when John explains the usage and purpose of the *figurae* that he presents in his *Liber figurarum*, he recalls the *Ars Notoria* in his description of the text's mystical ability to lead the practitioner upwards to visionary ecstasy, "in itself, Prayer comes from nothing. Figure proceeds from Prayer, and Visualizations from both."[52] In this description the reader notes the ascending hierarchy of devotion, which depends on both prayers and figures to lead the soul to mystical vision. In his original Old Compilation, John incorporated at least nineteen *figurae*, two of which have survived in later fourteenth-century copies of John's text [Figs. 4-5]. These two *figurae* are purely visual, stimulating the same effects as those of the *Ars Notoria* in

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[51] See the previous discussion of St. Augustine's *On Genesis* in chapter one, and Richard of St. Victor's understanding of the ecstatic experience. He states in the *Mystical Ark* that, "For when we are carried away either above or within ourselves by ecstasy of mind in contemplation of divine things, we immediately forget all exterior things – nay not only those which are outside us but also those which are in us." Richard of St. Victor, " The Mystical Ark," in *Richard of St. Victor: The Twelve Patriarchs, The Mystical Ark, and Book Three of the Trinity*, trans, Grover A. Zinn (New York: Paulist Press, 1979) 149-371, here 306. Richard's writings, like Augustine's, would have been an important part of John's monastic training.

[52] John of Morigny, *Liber figurarum* (Oxford, Bodley Library, MS liturg. 160, c. 1400. In e-mail dated February 26 from Claire Fanger, her translation, 6.

the practitioner. John implies as much when he describes the function of all the *figurae* in the *Liber figurarum*, "these are the holy keys to the spiritual understanding, by means of which the portals of spiritual understanding are able to be opened – nay, rather are opened."[53] Spiritual understanding, as John understood it, was a comprehension of those things divine; John believed that, "the faculty of reason in the human mind, which is held to be augmented and diminished by the influence of the heavenly bodies, is in every way conjoined to the divine reason (this is in the spiritual understanding) and even transmuted through it."[54] Bridging the gap between human and divine, the *figurae* served again as portals to another, higher realm like *notae* in the *Ars Notoria*.

Unfortunately, the Old Compilation seen today lacks the varied *figurae* of planets and the Virgin Mary once present in John's work; however the modern viewer should not envision John's *Liber figurarum* as a text reliant solely on visual stimuli. John did not depend on corporeal *simulacrum* of the divine to lead the soul, mind, and heart to a higher plane. John also instructed his devoted readers to visualize in their minds the words that adorn the page because, they too, have the ability to transcend: "And these words which follow according to their properties ought to be visualized or premeditated by the operator, not expressed with the tongue but in the heart."[55] Visualizing in the heart was a favorite trope of Hugh of St. Victor who instructs his pupils in the *Didascalion*, an

[53] John of Morigny, *Liber figurarum*, 9.
[54] John of Morigny, *Liber figurarum*, 8.
[55] John of Morigny, *Liber figurarum*, 14.

introduction to the seven liberal arts, interestingly enough, to envision in their heart the invisible wishes of God.[56]

John asks the readers in the *Liber figurarum* to direct their entreaties for knowledge of the seven liberal arts to the Virgin Mary. For instance, John states, "Visualize these words when you work for hope: May I have perfect hope and memory always of the mercy of God, his clemency, pity, sweetness, goodness."[57] None of the practitioners contemplating these words and visualizing them as they ponder, would have arrived at a standard image associated with these words. The words functioned much like St. Augustine's understanding of how the mind contemplates love in Mark 12:13, "while love in its proper nature can neither be discerned with the eye of the body, nor thought about in spirit by means of an image resembling a body, but only known and perceived by the mind, that is, the intellect."[58] Thus, when contemplating such concepts as goodness and kindness, the mind is led again to that blank slate where no visual image could intervene or distract and only the intellect, that part that was closest to divine reason, could comprehend; therefore, by placing the practitioner closer to the divine, John creates an opportune place to receive a vision.

These visualization prayers correspond with each *figurae*, both of which lead to actual visualizations or visions; thus, John created a text that is intensely visual from the

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[56]Hugh of St. Victor, *Didascalicon*. Cited in Ivan Illich, *In the Vineyard of the Text: A Commentary to Hugh's Didascalicon* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 28. Hugh of St. Victor's texts had lasting effects well into the fourteenth century. John probably was very familiar with the *Didascalicon* as a noviate and a child of the alb. John's usage of mental imaging, which mimics conventions used in the *Didascalion,* illustrate its lasting effects on training the medieval mind. Its conventions,

[57]John of Morigny, *Liber figurarum*, 17.

[58] St. Augustine, *On Genesis*, 475.

first word to the last *figurae*. When John is forced to reduce his *figurae* in the New Compilation to seven images of the Virgin Mary, he retains the strength of the words in the *Liber visionum* to lead the mind to colorful visualizations. The *cogitationes*, which are present in the New Compilation after the prologue, follow in the same vein as the prayers for visualizations, provoking vivid mental imaging, yet relying on a sort of narrative to facilitate visions. For instance, John asks his readers in the *cogitationes* to envision themselves watching the Annunciation of the Incarnation of Christ; however, instead of describing the circumstances of the event in vivid detail as to bring it before the eyes of the reader, John only informs the reader of what he must say in response to the situation.[59] Thus, again John did not rely on corporeal exactitude when provoking the "imagination,"[60] instead he put the mind into action forcing the reader to develop an image.

It is evident from John's employment of the visualization prayers as well as the *cogitationes* that he expected the viewer to visualize his words. This was not an outlandish request; in fact, his audience, monks who were educated in a manner similar to John, was familiar with the image making associated with the architectural mnemonic. When memorizing they were constantly forming vivid images so that they could remember the information later. It is this same technique, which allows the "imagination"

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[59] In an e-mail dated March 5, 2005, Claire Fanger sent her translation of the *cogitationes*. This particular quote corresponds to her translation on page 7.

[60] The modern understanding of the imagination had not yet developed in the medieval world. Therefore, although John and his audience may have had understood the concept of the imagination, it would not have been summarized in a word per se.

to run free, that enables the monks to visualize John's words and thus facilitate either a spiritual or corporeal understanding of his words that may lead to visions.[61]

Thus, when John inserts Chartres Cathedral into his text, a literary device that provokes the community's memory, he not only wants his audience to perform *collectio*, selecting relevant information from their mnemonic images to facilitate their understanding of his prologue, but also to envision Chartres Cathedral. Chartres is not just a setting for John's visions, a passive point of reference, but is a cognitive image, a place where one is constantly trying to interpret its meanings. Mary Carruthers describes a cognitive image in the following way:

> A cognitive image is designedly functional. In monastic rhetoric such an image can have effects that are both pedagogical and ethical, but those effects occur within the alert mind and coloring emotions of a viewer/listener. The image is used by its fashioner and, if it finds artistic form, by its audience as a cognitive tool.[62]

A cognitive image engenders thought and allows the mind to envision the creator's invention. The image is taken by the reader and personalized, made the individual's own through his varied experience. Chartres as a cognitive image incites the reader of John's prologue to ask the question, "what is it good for?"[63] And, thus, the narrative unfolds to another level.

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[61] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, 118.
[62] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, 118.
[63] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, 118.

VI. Chapter Three: Text and Image as Symbol: John of Morigny's Exploration Past the Pages of the *Liber Visionum*.

The prologue of the *Liber visionum* reads like a wicked torrent of action. There are near death experiences, bouts of inner turmoil, and scenes of divine revelation, all described by John of Morigny with a level of intense immediacy. For instance his *thema,* which begins his narrative of visions, unravels rapidly, communicating his heightened sense of fear:

> And lo, I saw a certain horrible figure, and it seemed to me absolutely certain that it was the enemy of the human race. And that figure rose up against me, wishing and craving to suffocate me. When I saw it I fled aghast in great fear from its terrible face, and it pursued me hither and thither, and could not catch me, and yet pressed upon me as it followed, so that I left the house I was in, fleeing from the face of my persecutor. And when I went outside it did not cease to follow me; and when it rose up hugely I stopped in my tracks and ran towards the church of the blessed Mary.[64]

John's rhetoric engages readers; it exudes urgency and fear, active emotions that attract readers to the narrative. John's step-by-step progression, beginning with seeing the horrible figure to arriving at Chartres Cathedral, guides readers down a hurried path to salvation. The path is the *ductus*, the flow of a composition, which leads readers through the work.[65]

Ductus is movement; it varies in pace, informed by the mood of the text. It could be frenzied, dashing down the text like the previously quoted passage from John, or it could be awestruck, moving in slow wonder. Most importantly the *ductus* must have

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[64] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 170.
[65] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, 77.

skopos, a goal, as defined by Consultus Fortunatianus, a contemporary of St. Augustine.[66] The *ductus*, provides the way to finding the goal, the treasure within the text. It is the means by which the mind is led. However, *ductus* is not always a clearly beaten path; there are obstacles that could impede reader's journey. As Carruthers explains:

> According to Fortunatianus, there are five kinds of *ductus*: simple, subtle, figurative, oblique and mixed. These are distinguished by how direct and easy a path you make for your audience—whether you let them just set along with no obstacles, or whether you want them to work a bit, to look beneath or through your words to another agenda you may have.[67]

Rich with *ductus*, John's *thema* leads the reader down the obstacle-laden path to Chartres, the intensity of the journey brought before the reader's eyes.

Effective *ductus* is supported and informed by *enageria*, "the bringing before the eyes," or sensual word painting of medieval rhetoric.[68] A skillful writer employs *enageria* to further ensnarl the reader into his discourse. *Enageria*, the elaborate description of places, things, moods, and actions always engages the medieval reader. When an author uses *enageria*, he writes words so that his words form vivid images within the minds of the reader. Quintilian, a first-century Roman rhetorician, assumed that readers normally tried to envision what they read, as did John.[69] Medieval readers, especially the cloistered monks, frequently engaged in mental imaging. David Connolly's research on imagined pilgrimage in Matthew Paris' itinerary maps illustrates the power of a monk's imagination. In Matthew Paris' maps there is a physical *ductus*; the lines and the symbols that demonstrate the route to Jerusalem lead the eye and hand on a journey that unfolds as the reader turns the pages. Benedictine monks, for whom the maps were

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[66] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, 79.
[67] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, 79.
[68] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, 118.
[69] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, 131.

intended, were bound to the *claustra*; they took a vow of stability under the Rule of St. Benedict.[70] Therefore, their venture into the pages of the itinerary was an exploration of the outer bounds of their society, "moving the soul from this world to the Heaven begins with the texts (and images) inscribed in the physical and material world of the manuscript page."[71] A text with vivid *enageria* and *ductus* arouses readers, awakening their imagination; therefore, John's vivid description of his alarming confrontation with the devil, induces the reader to follow as well, luring him down the streets of Chartres the city, to Chartres the Cathedral.

The *ductus* leading up to John's entrance into Chartres is noteworthy; it is illustrative of the change in tempo of the *ductus* and the sudden shift in place;

> And when I went outside it did not cease to follow me; and when it rose up hugely I stopped in my tracks and ran towards the church of the blessed Mary. I entered it through the right hand door of the main entrance on the west front.[72]

Prior to this moment in the *thema*, John is desperately trying to escape the malicious figure running "hither and thither." There is no sense of place; the readers are only aware that he leaves his house, most likely the residency of the children of the alb, north of Chartres Cathedral. Once outside, confronted by the overwhelming presence of the figure, John halts, momentarily providing a complete change in *ductus*. Then he turns to flee to a clearly defined place, the church of the blessed Mary, Chartres Cathedral, the church John so carefully notes at the beginning of the *thema*. For astute readers, this sudden change in *ductus* and place would have been marked as important, a sign to read and watch very closely to what happens next.

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[70] David Connolly, "Imagined Pilgrimage in the Itinerary Maps of Matthew of Paris," *The Art Bulletin* 81/4 (Dec., 1999), 598-622, here 598.
[71] David Connolly, "Imagined Pilgrimage," 599.
[72] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 170.

However, in spite of the change in tempo of the *ductus* and the orientation of the reader in the text, John slips into the cathedral with the agility of a snake, remarking solely on his entrance point: the right hand door of the main entrance on the west front. Has the reader been tricked, or is John employing *ductus* with Consultus Fortunatianus' advice in mind? It seems that at his moment of entrance, his step into salvation, John is the least descriptive. He provides the readers with precise directions on how he entered and where, but gives no description of the portal under which he enters. This lack of congruency in description would have made medieval readers pause, searching their memory (performing *collectio*) for an image that would bring the right door of the western façade of Chartres before their eyes with the vividness that John's *thema* had previously. This mental imaging corresponds precisely to the actions readers would have been involved in when reading the prayer visualizations of the *Liber figurarum* or the *cogitationes*; the mental imaging provoked in the prologue introduces the reader to the type of mental exercises in which he would be engaged throughout the *Liber Visionum*.

Once visualized within the readers' minds, the right door of the western façade of Chartres becomes a cognitive image. John's citation gains visual form, making it possible to be used not only by John to illustrate those mysteries hidden within his visions, but also by the readers to aid in understanding the mystery. The readers can glean information from the façade because it emits its own visual *enageria*.

Buildings, especially churches, displayed their own type of rhetoric, or *ekphrasis*. *Ekphrasis* in a structure is a stimulant for vision; it summons in the mind the structures

needed for imaginative meditation.[73] Like its derivative *enageria*, which is defined by its rich word painting, *ekphrasis* is characterized by its usage of imagery, which it employs to encourage contemplation. *Ekprhasis* functions on a structure that has clearly communicated imagery, because, in order to contemplate an image one must first have sound knowledge of what it is and what it means. Thus John's readers, presented with the cognitive image of the right door of the western façade of Chartres, must first discern the meaning of the image, tapping the resources of their mnemonic images. Mnemonic images fashioned by a person to memorize things, places, or words, was like a location marker; it marked a cluster of readings remembered and tagged together under the heading of the image. The readers would have rummaged through these readings to find an acceptable interpretation of the right portal; only then could the portal become vibrant with possibilities and interpretations— revealing the *ekphrasis* of its structure.

The image is the primary "text " from which all *collectio* would have begun and contemplation would have been spawned. For medieval viewers, reading an image involved several layers of analysis corresponding to the many ways in which one could interpret scripture. The twelfth-century Benedictine, Richard of St. Victor elaborates on the fourfold method of seeing in his exegesis on the Apocalypse of St. John.[74] Richard's categorization of the first mode of vision is phenomenal and physiological: the viewers open their eyes and receive the visual stimuli emitted by the images, taking in the colors and shapes of the objects. This type of vision corresponds with the historical analysis of

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[73] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, 222.

[74] For this recapitulation on Richard of St. Victor's fourfold description of vision, I rely heavily on the interpretation and discussion of, Madeline Caviness, "Images of Divine Order and the Third Mode of Seeing," *Gesta* 22/2 (1983), 48-64, 115-16.

scripture; one reads the narrative of both image and scripture as it is presented without relying on other references or allusions. The second mode of vision parallels the allegorical interpretation of scripture. This mode of vision begins with a corporeal analysis of the object, yet is internalized and understood for its mystical meaning. Richard uses Moses' vision of the burning bush to expound upon this type of vision further:

> For what do we understand by the flame but the grace of the Holy Spirit? What through the like bramble bush, rough, prickly, green, flowering, but the Blessed Virgin Mary…And thus, when the Son of God assumed flesh in the Virgin, overshadowed by the grace of the Holy Spirit, her virginal modesty remained unharmed.[75]

This physiological phenomenon gains mystical meaning through spiritual analogy. The second mode of visual analysis and interpretation leads to the third, which relies on physical exactitude of corporeal images but does not rely on the physiological perception of these images. Instead, much like St. Augustine's interpretation of spiritual vision, it relies on physical images already imprinted in the mind to facilitate an inner spiritual vision.

Barbara Nolan translates Richard's understanding of the third mode of vision explicating on his terms:

> the third mode invites the "oculi cordis" (eyes of the heart) to discover "formis et figures, et similitudinibus rerum (by means of forms and figures and the similitudes of things) the "occultarum veritas" (truth of hidden things)."[76]

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[75] Richardus a Sancto Victore, *Apocalypsim Joannis*, Cited in Barbara Nolan, *The Gothic Visionary Perspective* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 37.
[76] Nolan, *The Gothic Visionary Perspective*, 37.

The invisible, the unknown, is understood and realized through the visible, the known. When John alludes to a mystery being hidden in each figure he presents in the visions of his prologue, he is encouraging his readers to "see" and analyze these figures for their divinely mystical meanings. Richard does not state that there is a correspondent for this type of vision in scriptural interpretation; however, the fourth level of interpretation, which Richard alludes to as an anagogical interpretation, encompasses elements of the third mode of vision.

For Richard anagogy is "the ascent or elevation of the mind for supernatural interpretation."[77] Thus, when one sees anagogically one sees pure divine reality, which supercedes corporeal understanding and imagery. This parallels St. Augustine's intellectual vision, which emphasizes a transcendence that does not rely on the spiritually weak form of corporeal images. However, both the third and fourth modes of vision enable the viewer to elucidate divine reasoning, although one uses corporeal imagery and the other does not. Thus, it would seem that both are anagogical in content, elevating the mind for supernatural contemplation. As with John's *auctoritas* in his prologue, when readers recognized Chartres, the word, as a cognitive image, they would have engaged in visual analysis of John's citation using the four-fold method of interpretation. In the following paragraphs, I intend to recreate the visual analysis of the right door of the western façade as it would have been done by a medieval monk, beginning with a historical analysis and/or first mode of vision.

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[77] Nolan, *The Gothic Visionary Perceptive*, 37.

Approaching the right door on the western façade of Chartres, the viewer is confronted by an elaborate portal: jambs adorned with crowned figures, a tympanum looming above, sculpted with reliefs [Figs. 6-8]. The registers illustrate classical biblical scenes: the lower one depicting the Annunciation, the Visitation, and the central scene of the Nativity, and the middle illustrating the Presentation. These two lower narratives culminate in the upper centerpiece of the *sedes sapientiae*, the "seat of wisdom," which depicts the Christ child sitting on the lap of the Virgin Mary. Radiating outwards, encircling the tympanum, are two layers of archivolts carved with images of angels, two zodiac signs, and the seven liberal arts with their particular master or scholar. The tympanum is rich with many levels of interpretation; within its lintels it expresses the cathedral's veneration of Christ made flesh through the Incarnation. Mary as the mother of Christ clothes him in her humanity. She is the means by which the temporal, corporeal world is able to enjoy Christ's presence. Her central position in the Nativity (Christ's entrance into this world), the Presentation (Christ's introduction to the church with the guidance of Mary and Joseph), as well as the *sedes sapientiae* (Christ's relation to his followers as a beholder of wisdom during this time of grace[78] and also Christ as God), all demonstrate Mary's essential role in how the world perceives and knows Christ.[79] The

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[78] Margot Fassler's work on the western façade recreates the medieval liturgical function of the tympana as announcing the entrance or entering of the subjects displayed on the lintels but also highlighting the roles of the individuals entering. In her interpretation of the southern tympanum, the tympanum represents the time of grace, the present time in the Middle Ages. I will revisit her work later in the thesis. Margot Fassler, "Liturgy and Sacred History in the Twelfth-Century Tympana at Chartres," *The Art Bulletin*, 75,/3 (Sep., 1993), 499-520.

[79] The dogma expressed in the tympana is explained in great detail by Adolf Katzenellenbogen, *The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral: Christ, Mary, Ecclesia* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1959).

tympanum, in each of its different layers of iconography, expresses the sacred dogma of the Catholic Church especially the dogma most cherished by the diocese at Chartres Cathedral – the Incarnation of Christ through Mary. Sectioned off into horizontal registers that display a clear continuum of narrative, the iconography of the levels clearly communicate this information to the viewer; however, as the viewer's eyes ascend upward toward the archivolts that surround the sacred *sedes sapientiae*, the intended reading is not as easily discernable.

Prompted by this uncertainty, *collectio* begins in the readers. They begin to search their memories for appropriate images that refer to readings or any type of information that would help them interpret the archivolt's relation to the tympanum as a whole. The most relevant sources would likely have been Thierry of Chartres, the chancellor of the cathedral during the time of the construction on the western façade and therefore on the Royal Portal.[80] Thierry of Chartres shaped the course of Chartrain theology, creating at Chartres a curriculum that focused heavily on the liberal arts. It is hypothesized by scholars that Thierry of Chartres' espousal of the liberal arts led him on a scholastic crusade that culminated in the visual rhetoric of the southern portal of Chartres Cathedral's west facade.[81]

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[80] His chancellorship at the school of Chartres Cathedral from 1140 to at least 1148, coincides with the suggested dates for the Royal Portals at Chartres, 1145-1155, and thus gives rise to several hypotheses on his influential role in their construction, especially the right doorway, in particular, its archivolts which display the liberal arts.
[81] Katzenellenbogen, *The Sculptural Program of Chartres Cathedral*, 8-26.

In the early twelfth century, when Thierry of Chartres was teaching the liberal arts, they were in dire need of salvation. The followers of Cornificus[82] had streamlined the liberal arts, eliminating the fields of grammar and rhetoric from their formal, specialized study, insisting that grammar would come naturally to the student and rhetoric was utterly irrelevant.[83] Thierry of Chartres was certainly no stranger to the movement, its influences having reached the school of Chartres by at least 1126. However, he was never a supporter, preferring a more traditional approach to knowledge. His disapproval of the Cornifician method is apparent in the preface to his commentary on Cicero's *De inventione*: "we masters will be left alone in the schools unless we flatter the multitude and trap them into listening."[84] The Cornifician style of learning had grown increasingly popular, and Thierry of Chartres was being pressured to acquiesce to an audience that sought simplified instruction in the liberal arts, devoid of grammar and rhetoric. In response to this overwhelming demand, Thierry commented in his preface that, "This I will not do, for by the God of Truth, I have prostituted wares before many,

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[82] John of Salisbury, a twelfth century theologian and student of Thierry of Chartres, gives the name Cornificus to the chief opponent of the Chartrain pedagogy of the liberal arts. This name alludes to and perhaps derives from the ancient Roman rhetorican, Cornificus who was a detractor of the liberal arts. J. O. Ward, "The Date of the Commentary on Cicero's *De inventione* by Thierry of Chartres (ca.1095-1160?) and the Cornification Attack on the Liberal Arts," *Viator* 3 (1972), 219-73, here 223.
[83] J. O. Ward, "The Date of the Commentary on Cicero's *De inventione* by Thierry of Chartres," 224.
[84] Ward, "The Date of the Commentary on Cicero's *De inventione* by Thierry of Chartres," 237.

but won the favor of few."[85] With this assertion Thierry of Chartres began his scholastic campaign to revive the liberal arts in their entirety.

Thierry of Chartres' was a prolific writer, preferring to rebuff the Cornificans with a series of treatises that describe the usefulness of all the liberal arts. For instance, his work, the *Heptateuchon*, provides a compilation of several works on the seven arts for the medieval scholar including a compendia designed to facilitate study. His commentary on Cicero's *De Inventione* presents a detailed discourse on the *ars intrinseca* and *extrinseca* as modules of study for the liberal arts, demonstrating the essentiality of the liberal arts. In Thierry of Chartres' commentary on *De Inventione*, he reinforces the usage of the *accessus ad artem*, the introduction to the art or author. With this device the scholar could divide the subject into comprehensible sections. J. O. Ward explains that, "At best, the *accessus* encouraged reflection on the nature and function of knowledge; at worst, it reminded the preoccupied scholar that a wider intellectual world lay beyond the field of his special discipline."[86] The intellectual world that lay beyond included not only other liberal arts, but also the intangible, ethereal world of divine knowledge.

The classifications that derived from the *accessus ad artem—genus, officium, finis, materia,* and *partes*— enabled scholars to, "envisage and study human knowledge as an entire integrated corpus, directed towards a complete understanding of God and

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[85] Ward, "The Date of the Commentary on Cicero's *De inventione* by Thierry of Chartres," 237.
[86] Ward, "The Date of the Commentary on Cicero's *De inventione* by Thierry of Chartres," 247.

man."[87] The liberal arts were not to be seen as goals in themselves, but rather as a part of a ladder that ascended to divine knowledge. Boethius, in his *The Consolations of Music, Logic, Theology, and Philosophy*, a text which Thierry of Chartres undoubtedly consulted, describes the human endeavor to acquire knowledge as a constant progression towards Divine wisdom,

> But this love of Wisdom on the part of the understanding of the soul means illumination by that pure Wisdom and in some way a return to itself a recall. Therefore, it seems that the search for Wisdom is the search for the Divine and the love for that pure Mind.[88]

Seen as instruments used to gain divine knowledge, the reason for the liberal arts' placement on the southern tympana of Chartres becomes clear, perhaps solidifying Thierry of Chartres' involvement in its construction.

The sculpture on the southern doorway of Chartres is a diagram of proper education as expressed by Thierry of Chartres. The seven liberal arts adorn the outer layer of archivolts with their proper attributes and their corresponding inventor or exemplary teacher, except for Arithmetic, that lacks its attribute. The arrangement of the arts forms a haphazard circle beginning with Grammar on the right and continuing clockwise from Grammar on the lower right to Dialectic on the lower left. The arts then circle upwards after Dialectic, continuing with Rhetoric, Geometry, Arithmetic, Astronomy, and ending with Music in the innermost layer of the archivolts [Figs. 9-10].[89] The liberal arts are each accompanied by their associated scholar: Grammar by Priscian;

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[87] Ward, "The Date of the Commentary on Cicero's *De inventione* by Thierry of Chartres," 249.
[88] Katzenellenbogen, *The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral*, 17.
[89] Katzenellenbogen, *The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral*, 21.

Dialectic by Aristotle; Rhetoric by Cicero; Arthimetic by Boethius; Astronomy by Ptolemy; and Music with its representative [Fig. 11]. All of these figures are in accordance with the authors selected by Thierry in his *Heptateuchon*. Katzenellenbogen suggests that Geometry is not accompanied by the author Thierry selected in his compilation because, Euclid, the author who inspired the creation of the *Heptateuchon,* is shown in the archivolts; this inclusion draws a stronger connection between the portal and Thierry.[90] Commenting on the unique arrangement of scholars and their liberal arts, Katzenellenbogen states in his description of the archivolts that:

> On the one hand, their [the authors'] writings are indispensable for human wisdom. On the other hand, their place close to the religious cycle makes it obvious that their works will serve the purpose of understanding Christ, the Wisdom of the Lord.[91]

Katzenellenbogen's interpretation of the southern door derives from the many sources that would have been known by the medieval populace through sermons or formal education; hence, the conclusions drawn by Katzenellenbogen would have most likely concurred with the medieval conceptions of the sculpture. Thus, Katzellenbogen's reading provides a basis from which we, as modern readers, can discern how John's readers would have read the program historically, using their first mode of vision.

The historical message of the portal thus realized, the second and third mode of vision begins to stimulate the *ekphrasis* of the sculpture, encouraging a mystical reading of its images. This natural progression from corporeal understanding to mystical understanding, all prompted by a physical structure, is not a far reach of the imagination.

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[90] Katzenellenbogen, *The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral*, 21.
[91] Katzenellenbogen, *The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral*, 21.

In fact those theologians who influenced the construction of these Gothic edifices envisioned just such an ascent. A contemporary of Thierry of Chartres, Abbot Suger of St. Denis, addressed issues of anagogical inspiration within the architecture of his renovated St. Denis. For Abbot Suger, any artistic rendition of theological truths was anagogically weighted,[92] the images engraved on the edifice of St. Denis were portals that opened the door to contemplation and provoked mystical vision. Barbara Nolan's writings on Suger's interpretation of the function of St. Denis elucidate his anagogical intentions for the structure:

> This model [of the church] informed by human imagination and grace, could openly imitate divine reason -- even participate in it -- and thus lead the mind and heart by the details of its construction, to appreciate the spiritual work of the divine artificer."[93]

Abbot Suger endows the church with the same spiritual force that John gives his *figurae* in the *Liber figurarum*; in both of their conceptions of images there is a belief that within them there is a sacredness that could be harnessed, sending the viewer into anagogical contemplation. This conception of images was retained in popular thought for several centuries as John's work attests. This same conception was realized artistically not only at St. Denis, but also at Chartres Cathedral. At both Chartres and St. Denis the images are imbued with the intent of transcending borders between the divine and the corporeal; thus, it is only natural for the readers of John's prologue to the *Liber visionum* to interpret the southern portal – the right door of the western façade through which John enters as he tries to escape the "horrible figure" – not only as a base historical truth of the Bible, or a

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[92] Nolan, *The Gothic Visionary Perspective*, 43
[93] Nolan, *The Gothic Visionary Perspective*, 40.

scholastic campaign of Thierry of Chartres, but also as a lever that could propel them into anagogical contemplation and reasoning.

Analogical reasoning derives from an understanding of the mystical properties of a text or an image; this analysis of the symbols would foster an understanding of the other concepts, ideas, and images that the symbols allude to; therefore, as the reader analyzes the southern door they are constantly exploring it within the context of the text, as it alludes to John's goals. John's claim that one could acquire "knowing of all the arts"[94] with the aid of the *Liber visionum* pervades the reader's thoughts, it is one of the first elements that needs verification. Thus, as we begin to analyze the sculptural program we must envision it in John's terms, which correspond to his agenda of legitimizing the *Liber visionum*.

As John outlines in the prologue, the preliminary stage of knowledge acquisition is mediated by the "subtly unheard words" of angels. Then, as one begins to excel, one hears the Virgin Mary herself. The process finally peaked with direct visions mediated by "Him" whom the reader can assume to be Christ and the source of all knowledge.[95] Once compared to the methodology of the *Liber visionum*, the southern tympanum of the western façade of Chartres becomes a gloss of the text. The liberal arts that adorn the outer layer of archivolts surrounding the Incarnation – or rather, for these purposes, the "knowledge acquisition" scene – represent John's first claim that the viewer will acquire knowledge of the liberal arts through their usage of the *Liber visionum*. The second ring of archivolts illustrates the angels, who will be the first arbiters of knowledge the readers

[94] Fanger and Watson "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 166.
[95] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 166.

will encounter. Then, progressing into the uppermost register of the tympanum, the Virgin and Child, depicted as the *sedes sapientiae*, express the ultimate and most merited form of knowledge acquisition, that which comes from Christ, the godhead, and the Virgin Mary, the beloved intercessor.

The culmination of the southern tympanum, the *sedes sapientiae*, is, for John, the beginning, the foundation, and the end of an elaborate process. The sculpture literally translates into the "seat of wisdom," alluding to the "seat" as a center or place of wisdom.[96] The Virgin Mary creates this seat or place of wisdom, as she is the throne on which the Christ child sits. This metaphor had far-reaching implications in the Middle Ages. Christ, the embodiment of incarnate wisdom, is made flesh through Mary's womb, thus making the Virgin the seat of incarnate wisdom. As the Virgin Mary is that link for Christ, bridging the divine and corporeal realms, she is also that link for human beings, creating a link from the corporeal to the divine realm of knowledge. She is *the* intercessor, and as Marina Warner suggests, as intercessor she is never far from her natural role as mother.[97] In the tympanum, the Virgin Mary's role as intercessor is communicated through her strategic position between the corporeal world of knowledge, represented by the liberal arts, and the divine realm of knowledge, expressed by her proximity to the Christ child and the angels that surround them. The Virgin Mary's intercessory powers enabled her to entreat Christ on a scholar's behalf; thus, she became the conduit by which the all-knowing Christ and the intellectually curious scholar could

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[96] Ilene H. Forsyth, *The Throne of Wisdom* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 1.

[97] Marina Warner, *Alone of All her Sex* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1976), 288.

communicate. Thus explicated, the southern portal becomes a visual explanation and justification of John's methodology in the *Liber visionum*. Having used the door as a cognitive tool within the prologue, John provides an opportunity for the readers to interact with the image, encouraging them to draw conclusions and inferences from his work.

Otto von Simpson, in his book, *The Gothic Cathedral: Origins of Gothic Architecture and the Medieval Concept of Order*, elaborates on the premise that lies beneath this legitimizing phenomenon:

> for medieval man what we would call symbol is the only objectively valid definition of reality. Maximus the confessor...actually defines what he calls "symbolic vision" as the ability to apprehend within the objects of sense perception the invisible reality of the intelligible that lays beyond them."[98]

Maximus' conception of images as visual representations of reality expresses medieval viewers' total faith in the power of images. In accordance with Maximus' sentiments, Otto von Simpson asserts that Gothic architecture was a representation of supernatural reality for its medieval audience. The ornamentation that adorned the facades was a visual document of church theology that was seen as truth. Thus, when John refers to Chartres, employing its southern door as a cognitive image, he concedes to its authority as a visual manifestation of truth. With this foundation of authority, an interpretation of Chartres is legitimized through its associations and congruency with the truth of Chartres' images. Therefore, when John cites the southern portal of Chartres' west facade as an illustration of the methodology of the *Liber visionum*, he is in fact using it as a

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[98] Otto von Simson, *The Gothic Cathedral: Origins of Gothic Architecture and the Medieval Concept of Order* (New York: Pantheon, 1956), xx.

legitimizing tool. He is arguing that Chartres' "truthful" images not only illustrate his aims in the *Liber visionum*, but, in fact, validate his methodology through their allusive connection to his purpose. This confirmation would have greatly impacted those in John's audience who needed confirmation of the positive and beneficial nature of John's claims; however, this interpretation of Chartres only presents the methodology of acquiring knowledge as a legitimately innocuous process. For those in John's audience who had been deceived by the methodology of conjuring visions in the *Ars Notoria*, the second vision-inducing system had to be validated also.

VII. Chapter Four: Liturgical Function, Historical Precedent: Envisioning the Cathedral at Chartres

The modern conception of Chartres is largely a medieval one, cultivated by medieval theologians and monks who wanted to persuade the lay as well as the clerical audience of the Virgin's mystical presence there. The dogma of the cathedral was universally established in the *Miracles of Our Lady of Chartres*, a collection of twelfth-century miracle stories in Latin compiled around 1197 by a cleric who lived at Chartres. The miracles were recompiled and written in French verse by Jean le Marchant, c. 1262.[99] Dawn Hayes postulates that the twelfth century compilation of the *Miracles* was, "an instrument carefully designed to offset social, economic, and geographic odds set against the project."[100] For John and his audience, the *Miracles* created a history of Chartres and set a precedent for miraculous occurrences at the cathedral.

The cathedral fire of 1194 set back plans to renovate and redesign Chartres and limited funds had to be diverted from the previous project to pay for repairs ensuing from the fire. The canons at Chartres had to raise money if they wanted to continue with the renovation, yet opportunities were few and far between. Chartres Cathedral could not count on commercial income as Chartres was outside of major trade routes; even its position between the rivers Eure and Loir(e) was of no advantage as neither were

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[99] Benedicta Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind:Theory, Record, and Event 1000-1215* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1982), 153.
[100] Dawn Marie Hayes, *Body and Sacred Place in Medieval Europe, 1100-1389* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 31.

navigable in the Middle Ages.[101] The only major source of income in medieval Chartres was agriculture; however, the townspeople who cultivated the land and harvested the wheat were not on amicable terms with the church due to the cathedral's tax immunity. The conflict between the two groups reached a peak in 1210 when the townspeople rioted in the cloister.[102] Chartres Cathedral was in trouble – at odds with its populace and in need of financial support.

It was the chief aim of the *Miracles* to revive interest in Chartres. The *Miracles* in their two versions, the Latin and Old French, were intended for two audiences who were essential in restoring Chartres and continuing the building process. As Dawn Hayes suggests, the Latin version may have been written with the clergy in mind as they were well versed in the language and their resources were needed. The Old French version was directed to laypeople, not only to implore them for their help, but also to cultivate and expand the cult of the Virgin Mary, which was a potentially vast source of income.[103] In order to encourage interest in both groups, the *Miracles* had to be charged with credulous miraculous occurrences that revolved around a tangible artifact which could harness the Virgin Mary's presence at Chartres. However, in popular medieval Mariology, the Virgin Mary had not been localized in one space because 1.) it was generally believed that she was totally assumed into heaven, leaving no fragment of clothing or of her body, and 2.) according to certain theologians like St. Bernard, the Virgin's main miracle was birthing

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[101] Hayes, *Body and Sacred Place in Medieval Europe*, 27.
[102] Hayes, *Body and Sacred Place in Medieval*, 27. Also see, Barabara Abou-El-Haj, "The Audiences for the Medieval Cult of Saints," *Gesta*, 30/1 (1991), 3-15.
[103] Hayes, *Body and Sacred Place in Medieval Europe*, 31.

Christ, which did not occur in any western European country.[104] There was a generalized acceptance that the Virgin Mary's presence was everywhere, mediating at all times between Christ and human beings.

However, Chartres defied this myth, retaining one of the items Mary "surely" left behind — the *sancta camisia*, the shirt worn by the Virgin Mary during the Nativity. According to miracle twenty-seven of the *Miracles*, King Charles the Bald gave the relic of the *sancta camisia* to Chartres in the ninth century, providing the cathedral with this material manifestation of the Virgin's divinity.[105] The *sancta camisia* is the touchstone of intercessory power, for it had touched not only the Virgin, but Christ as well. In one piece of fabric Mother and Son were connected, the concept of intercession made vividly corporeal and tangible. The *Miracles*' emphasis on the *sancta camisia* not only implies the presence of the Virgin Mary at Chartres, where the relic resides, but also the presence of her dutiful son, Christ. As Hayes elaborates, "If Christ loved Mary as his natural mother, and if Mary had chosen Chartres as her special residence, then a direct and effective pipeline functioned between people and God in the sacred place of the cathedral."[106]

Although this metaphor is implied within the dogma of the relic, the *Miracles* – the mouthpiece for the *sancta camisia* and Chartres – diffuses the presence of the Virgin Mary as well as localizes her powers at Chartres. Some of the miracles included in the *Miracles* occur outside the domain of Chartres Cathedral, yet through each persons'

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[104] Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind*, 133
[105] Hayes, *Body and Sacred Place in Medieval Europe*, 33.
[106] Hayes, *Body and Sacred Place in Medieval Europe*, 41.

veneration of the *sancta camisia* there is a focus on Chartres Cathedral as the relic's home. In fact, many of the benefactors of the Virgin's goodwill in the *Miracles* go to Chartres after the miracle has occurred, giving thanks to the Virgin Mary.[107] This reaffirms the Virgin Mary's presence at Chartres Cathedral. She is the mistress of Chartres, and using Warner's interpretation of a Pauline reference, she is "the neck that joins Christ, the head of the Church, to the body of the faithful."[108] Thus, when John stands before Chartres Cathedral in his visions, he stands before the primary residence of the Virgin Mary. Her presence is undeniable there, and for John it is essential. How John circumambulates, explores, discovers, and utilizes Chartres Cathedral informs just how the cathedral legitimizes the *Liber visionum's* claims. His movements conform to liturgical conceptions of the church and by reenacting these sacred performances he adds to the religiosity and orthodoxy of his text.

John interacts with Chartres predominately in the second half of his visions in the prologue. He notes their importance, sectioning them off from the rest of the visions in his prologue and giving them the following heading: "here begins the second part, about the visions that I had after making the confession and the revelation of this book."[109] In these visions, John participates in the singing and creation of hymns all conducted within

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[107] Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind*, 154.
[108] Marina Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex,* 286.
[109] John mentions having seen and run toward a bishop in one of his visions. It is unclear if this is what he means by having confessed to a bishop or not. The recount of this vision can be found in the eighth vision, Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 181-84.

Chartres Cathedral.[110] John uses Chartres Cathedral as a legitimizing crutch, asserting that all of the liturgical activities that are performed inside the church are ordained, first by the Virgin Mary and secondly by the cathedral as it is a repository of legitimacy and the residence of the Virgin Mary. Although John focuses primarily on the inner activities of the church, his second vision, which begins with a circumambulation of the cathedral from the northern façade, recreates the solemn veneration of the exterior of the cathedral, perhaps deriving from medieval processional traditions at Chartres. Analyzing John's exploration of the exterior of the cathedral reminds the readers of the *thema*, in which John rushes to Chartres Cathedral most likely bypassing the northern façade and entering by the western façade.

In his second vision of the second part of the *Liber visionum*, John tells his readers that he was accompanied and escorted by angels, "When I was among them [angels] and together with them, we all left the church at once by the north door, circling the church until we came before the main door on the western side."[111] The vision highlights his divine company and makes careful note of their path, yet does not reveal any other higher or pertinent information to the readers. However, when compared closely to the *Liber figurarum*, John's special attention to procession in the prologue gains new dimensions of meaning.

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[110] John gives the impression that he uses these hymns within the *Liber Visionum* but of this I am not certain.
[111] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 189.

John informs his readers of the specific methodology of the *Liber figurarum* in its introductory sections. The practitioner uses both the prayers and *figurae* included in the *Liber figurarum* to incite visions. To defend his methodology, John states:

> But someone might say that this is a new fashion of praying, and that it is not recognized by the church; but it would be false to say this because the church prays in a threefold manner in the mass: first with prayers we call collects in the beginning or introit mass; second it prays with prayers and figures, and this in the secrets and in beginning of the canon… and third it prays with mental visualizations, prayers and figures.[112]

As Claire Fanger notes, John's metaphor conforms to Durandus of Mende's conception of the mass.[113] Durandus divides the mass into four sections instead of three, beginning with the introit mass, sung by priests as they approach the altar. The introit mass leads to the offertory, which involves the signing of the cross, and the mass ends with the communion and thanksgiving, both of which involve mental imaging to recreate the sacred act of the Eucharist.[114] John's focus is centered primarily on the liturgical performances that are conducted within the church; however, the exterior was as important to the functionality of the liturgy as the interior.

In Margot Fassler's discussion of the western façade of Chartres Cathedral, she uses introit tropes, which could be any number of short, formulistic phrases used in Gregorian chants or the interpolation of a phrase or passage into the authorized service, and liturgical commentary to recreate the liturgical functionality of all three portals. Fassler incorporates Durandus of Mende's *Rationale divinorum officiorum*, seeing it as an authoritative source on liturgical proceedings, particularly those conducted at Chartres.

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[112] John of Morigny, *Liber figurarum*, 6.
[113] John of Morigny, *Liber figurarum*, 7.
[114] John of Morigny, *Liber figurarum*, 7. See Fanger's footnote, 23.

As Fassler notes, it has been postulated that Durandus spent some of his life at Chartres as a canon, and may even have created his *Rationale* with Chartres' liturgy in mind.[115] In his commentary, Durandus comments on the introit tropes' specific emphasis on the bishop's entrance into the church as an allusion to the entrance of Christ into the world.[116] Using Durandus' comment on the introit tropes as a starting point and the Chartrain manuscript Provins 12 (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Lat. 945) as proof.[117] Fassler develops her thesis arguing that the introit tropes of the mass were used mostly on feast days when the bishop presided and led a procession. As she asserts, these grand feasts were not only informed by the auditory spectacle of various introit tropes being sung, but they were also punctuated visually through the bishops, priests, and the laypeoples's entrances into the church, which were highlighted and informed by the sculpture and doors under through which they entered.

There are two aspects of Fassler's discussion that are pertinent to the readers' understanding of John's reference: her conception of processions as derived from medieval and modern sources, and her understanding of the tympana as visual aides. Fassler notes that no medieval processionals survive from Chartres. Nevertheless, she classifies evidence of Chartres processionals, based on other immediate northern French cathedrals, into two categories: those associated with the cathedral itself, and those which

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[115] Margot Fassler, "Liturgy and Sacred History in the Twelfth-Century Tympana at Chartres," *The Art Bulletin* 75 (1993), 499-520, here 502.
[116] Fassler, "Liturgy and Sacred History in the Twelfth-Century Tympana at Chartres," 502-503.
[117] Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Lat. 945, c. 1100.

required procession to other churches and back again.[118] I propose that John's readers saw in his circuit of Chartres Cathedral, from the northern to the western façade, a form of the first type of processional, one that was associated with the cathedral itself and informed by its iconography.

Beginning on the northern façade, John presents the reader with a plethora of recalled visual stimuli [Figs. 12-13]. The central tympanum of the façade depicts the Triumph of the Virgin Mary with her death and subsequent resurrection in the lower registers. The Triumph of the Virgin Mary, which immortalizes the act of her coronation by her son, Christ, prefigures the Virgin as the Church who is the Bride of Christ [Fig. 14].[119] This significance is highlighted not only in the central tympanum, but also in the liturgy of the cathedral. After the fire of 1194, Chartres ceased to celebrate October 17th as the Dedication of the Church, instead referring to the day as the Commemoration of the Virgin Mary.[120] At this time there is a definite solidification of the cathedral and the Virgin Mary as one, which is acknowledged in the *Miracles* and supported throughout the architectural and liturgical framework of Chartres.[121] The northern and southern tympana

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[118] Fassler, "Liturgy and Sacred History in the Twelfth-Century Tympana at Chartres," 500.

[119] Katzenellenbogen, *The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral,* 59. Also see, Penny Schine Gold, *The Lady and the Virgin: Image Attitude, and Experience in Twelfth-Century France* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1985), 43-76. Gold addresses this motif of the Virgin's coronation and the Virgin's roles as *sponsa*, or bride, of Christ and personification of the Church.

[120] Katzenllenbogen, *The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral*, 60. The fact that the *sancta camisia* survived this and previous fires may have contributed to this rededication. Malcom Miller, *Chartres Cathedral* (New York: Riverside Book Co., 1985) 5-8.

[121] This concept is not unique to Chartres. It was established in the Pauline reference,"the neck that joins Christ, the head of the Church, to the body of the faithful," See Warner,

on this northern façade – built later but nonetheless representing this change in philosophy – emphasize the miraculous and dogmatically important events in the life of the Virgin Mary. These scenes, as we shall see, make the Virgin's presence at Chartres more concrete and special.

The left tympanum of the northern façade depicts the Adoration of the Magi in the largest register with the two lower registers illustrating the Nativity of Christ and the Annunciation [Fig. 15]. To a certain extent, this program repeats scenes from the southern tympanum of the west façade at Chartres. The arrangement of the elements on the northern façade, however, creates a time continuum when read from bottom to top and reemphasizes the role of the Virgin. The right tympanum on this same porch illustrates within its largest register the suffering Job on the dung heap and on the lower register the Judgment of Solomon. Thus, as viewers observe and analyze the tympana as an iconographic whole, they envision the evolution of the relationship between the Old Church and the New Church, beginning with the Old Testament, right-hand portal, continuing with the Incarnation on the left, and culminating in the everlasting relationship between the Church and Christ established in the central tympanum.[122] This relationship is manifested corporeally in the relic of the *sancta camisia* which again, becomes physical proof of the legitimacy of these claims asserted at Chartres.

Alone of All Her Sex, 286. This was also thoroughly engrained into popular ideology through St. Bernard's exegesis concerning the Song of Songs. See Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex*, 121-34.

[122] For more information on this metaphor see, Katzenellenbogen, *The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral*, 68.

For John's readers who are circumambulating the cathedral with him, this external journey is preparatory, a foundation for their further exploration of the cathedral. It establishes the importance of the Virgin, alluding to her localization at Chartres through the building's sculptural iconography and miraculous relic. Thus, the northern facade provides a lens by which the readers should view subsequent events. This experience is not limited to its standard iconography, however, for included in the northern façade's jamb program is a depiction of a person holding a scroll and standing on a dragon, an illustration of the magical arts of the Middle Ages.[123] This figure is located in an arrangement of the mechanical arts, which also includes Architecture, Painting, Philosophy, and Magic [Fig. 16]. Michael Camille suggests that Magic, standing to the left of Philosophy, represents the sinister nature of thought, curiosity and experimentation.[124] This hypothesis could be true, but it is exciting to think that a representation of the mechanical art, magic, was recognized and even referenced in the "truthful" images of the façade of the cathedral. If John meant for his allusion to the northern façade to elicit this specific image cannot be established with certainty. There is even the possibility that it was not artistically rendered on the northern façade until 1316.[125] However, what the figure does propose for the current discussion is the Church's acknowledgment of magic as a driving and compelling force within the medieval world. Chartres' inclusion of magic as a mechanical art is a nod to members of its audience like John and his readers.

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[123] Sue A. Levine, *The Northern Foreportal Column Figures of Chartres Cathedral* (Fankfurt am Main: Verlag Peter Lang, 1984), 121.
[124] Camille, "Visual Art in the Two Manuscripts of the Ars Notoria," 135.
[125] Camille, "Visual Art in the Two Manuscripts of the Ars Notoria," 134.

The northern porch, in its rich iconography, jogs the memory of the readers, highlighting those elements of the Virgin's divinity and humanity that were highlighted in the *Miracles* and other medieval texts. Its elements become a visual gloss that prepares John's readers for the experience to come. Thus, by the time the readers reach the western façade they are already well informed. When John took this same imagined path that he describes in the *thema* and second part of the *Liber figurarum* – leaving his house, hurrying past the northern porch, and arriving at the western façade – his steps cued these visual clues.[126] I believe that John made a conscious decision both times to ignore the viable option of entering Chartres by the northern façade. Even as he passes it by, he still invokes its message. This makes it no happenchance that John chooses the western façade; it is a lucid, rational decision even in the context of his dreams. Therefore, as readers envision John in front of the western façade, they must analyze the scene within the context of John's consciously constructed goals.

As with John's literary citations of *auctoritas*, by entering from the western façade of Chartres, John recalls his predecessor, St. John the evangelist. When visualizing the western front of any church, connotations of St. John's apocalyptic vision flooded the cerebrum of the medieval viewer.[127] The Second Coming of Christ was depicted on every medieval western front. Christ sitting on his throne surrounded by angels, the twenty-four elders, and the personifications of the evangelists, recalls Revelations 4 in which St. John

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[126] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 207.
[127] Michael Camille, *Glorious Visions* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996), 28. Also see, Roger Stalley, *Early Medieval Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 59-83. Stalley notes the iconographical importance of architecture and explains how types of medieval architecture elucidate dogma.

the evangelist sees the Apocalypse. As the Apocalypse unfolds, St. John sees the new Jerusalem:

> And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband…And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain: and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God.[128]

John the Evangelist is swept away from the destruction of the world and given a glimpse of the celestial paradise that awaits.

The central tympanum of the western façade evokes connotations of the Apocalypse that the evangelist describes: Christ sits upon his throne in his *mandorla*, sternly gesturing a benediction, ready to judge the faithful and non-faithful [Fig. 17]. The allegorical forms of the four evangelists and representations of Enoch and Elijah surround him. Angels adorn the archivolts, and the twenty-four elders of the Apocalypse are depicted on the lower lintel; the celestial court is present. This is classic apocalyptic iconography and its placement on the central tympanum makes the viewer a witness to St. John the Evangelist's prophecy of the Apocalypse. However, the specific representation of St. John's vision of the new Jerusalem is the cathedral itself. For the medieval reader and viewer, the church was the new Jerusalem adorned like a Bride for her husband, Christ. This image is established in the central tympanum of the northern façade where the Virgin is shown as *sponsa* and Church, but gains allegorical potency in the central tympanum of the western façade. In this interpretation of the iconography of the second coming, there is a subtle allusion to the church as a manifestation of the future

[128] Revelations 21.

relationship between man and his destiny. John capitalizes on the malleability of this analogy, using it to define his visionary position, and to legitimize the scope of his aims.

Like St. John the Evangelist, John of Morigny sees the new Jerusalem as a safe haven, one in which the grace of the Bride abounds. By alluding to himself as a visionary of the same caliber as the evangelist, John of Morigny attempts to portray himself as a prophetic visionary. This portrayal is, in fact, key to how readers interpret John's *thema*. John's claim that his *thema* was a vision shown to him out of due time,[129] has prophetic implications. Although unknown to John at the moment of the vision, the *thema's* message foreshadows his subsequent visions. The meanings and mysteries hidden in this one vision illuminate the rest of the visions, providing focus and closure. Prophecy is proclaimed in the central tympanum of the western façade. It is reaffirmed every time readers envision themselves standing before the tympana.

Prophecy or, better, an understanding of divine reasoning expressed before due time, is a major component of the *Liber visionum's* overarching claims for its practitioners. Nevertheless, John most often focuses the attention of his audience on the southern tympanum of the west façade, encouraging us to explore its contents. In Fassler's discussion of the liturgical function of the southern tympanum, she reads it as communicating the time of Grace:

> the time represented here is the time of Grace, as Hugh of St. Victor and other contemporary theologians defined it, the time after the Incarnation, when wisdom was discovered by reading Scripture with the help of the liberal arts.[130]

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[129] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 170.
[130] Fassler, "Liturgy and Sacred History in the Twelfth-Century Tympana at Chartres," 510.

The southern tympanum emphasizes the now, the things that are possible during the present era of God's grace. It provides an effective balance against the central tympanum of the Second Coming of Christ, which alludes to the power of prophecy, and thus is not of the present. Prophecy always projects into the future and while this is important to John's audience, its members are more concerned with the immediate here and now. Thus, when John selects the southern tympanum for his entrance, he argues that any of the events after his entrance are plausible in this present era of Grace. Imbued with the spiritual implications of both the northern and western fronts, John's personal processional around the exterior of the cathedral culminates with a promise of present Grace. And with this added assurance, both John and his readers enter the sanctuary of Chartres.

VIII. Chapter Five: Entering the Tabernacle: Visions, Miracles, and the Medieval Mind.

In John's thema, he recreates his first enthrallment with the cathedral and his first vision of the Virgin Mary:

> and when I was in the church, I immediately lifted my eyes — I was next to the door at some distance from it — towards the image of the blessed Virgin Mary. And lo, suddenly the devoted Virgin Mary counseled me sweetly with a sign of her arm that I should come to her. After seeing this I ran to her quickly and fled as though to the true comfort and refuge of sinners guarding myself under her protection and under her hand.[131]

Once John enters the tabernacle he is instantaneously confronted by the vivid apparition of the Virgin Mary. Through John's usage of *enageria* he paints for the reader a startling moment when, after he has been pursued relentlessly by his enemy and the tension and energy of the *thema* had reached its height, he steps into refuge and at once is spell-bound by the image of the Virgin Mary. The slight pause and change in *ductus* that occurs between John's immediate eye-contact with the image of the Virgin and his subsequent rush to her comfort, illustrates for the reader John's amazed state. That an object could transfix a viewer was indicative of late medieval concepts of sight. As Michael Camille notes, the modern day viewer often considers vision in passive terms, the reflection of inverted images on the retina;[132] the medieval viewer, however, perceived vision as rays spouting forth from the eye, "illuminating the world around so that the beholders could

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[131] Fanger, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 170.
[132] Camille, *Glorious Visions*, 19.

literally be trapped by the gaze of an image."[133] John does not control his spellbound attraction to the image of the Virgin Mary; the image sends out its rays to John and captures his attention. However, at this moment in his *thema*, it is difficult to determine exactly what was the object, if indeed it was an object, that had enthralled him.

Although John fails to specify which image of the Virgin Mary he is referring to, his sight line of the image, a little distance inside the southern portal looking towards the altar, indicates only one image that was known to miraculously transform and counsel devotees.[134] In the second part of his visions, John gives readers a more descriptive account of the image, revealing its identity:

> It seemed to me that I was in the great church of the Virgin Mary at Chartres in front of the main altar at the church, and I was petitioning the glorious Virgin there. And when I petitioned her a little bit, lo, the silver image, having been transformed anticipated it.[135]

In the *thema* John's position by the door, looking down the nave would have put him in the direct sight line of *Notre Dame la Blanche*, a thirteenth century silver image of the Virgin and Child located on the main altar in the choir [Fig. 18].[136] The *Notre Dame la*

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[133]Michael Camille, *The Gothic Idol* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 223.

[134] The stained glass window of Cardinal Stephen kneeling before the silver statue, Notre Dame la Blanche is a testament to the sculpture's power. See, Jane Welch Williams, *Bread, Wine, and Money: The Windows of the Trades at Chartres Cathedral* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 56-57.

[135] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 187.

[136] The Notre Dame La Blanche sculpture is now lost. It was replaced by its counter statue, Notre Dame du Pilier in the fourteenth century. John's identification and gravitation to the Notre Dame la Blanche alerts art historians that in the beginning of the fourteenth century the statue had not yet been replaced. Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 20. Also see, Etienne Houvet, *Chartres: Guide of the Cathedral*, Malcom Miller, trans., (Chartres : Editions Houvet-La Crypte

Blanche is prefigured by the *sedes sapientiae* that adorns the southern tympanum of the western façade, creating a conceptual whole in terms of John's personal procession.[137] Within entering the cathedral, the *sedes sapientiae* of the tympanum is given three-dimensionality in the form of *Notre Dame la Blanche*, further promulgating the concept of the Virgin Mary's presences within the church.

The *Notre Dame la Blanche* is now lost; however, the modern reader can imagine the statue that confronted the medieval viewer as a gloriously decorated object. As Michael Camille notes, the modern day vision of medieval objects stripped to stark wood, stone, alabaster, metal or ivory would not have been the objects the medieval viewer would have seen.[138] The statues of the Virgin Mary were polychromed, given natural hues for their skin and vivid primary colors for their clothing. Metal statues were encrusted with gems like the statue of St. Foy at Conques, and sometimes dressed with fabric. This is of particular importance to John's "vivification" of the statue.

The tangible, "naturalism" of the Virgin Mary in the round, in contrast to the exterior relief, is a point of access. In its representation, as a form of simulacrum, there was an underlying conception of the statue as a means of transcendence. Jeffrey Hamburger elaborates on this concept:

1999), 10. Also see, Williams, *Bread, Wine, and Money*, 57. Wiliams also speaks of the silver statue that was installed on the main altar in the twelfth century.

[137] Although at first I use the procession metaphor in relation to the second vision of part two, it only seems natural that I continue with this metaphor when looking at John's *thema* because it is likely that John took the same path during his *thema*.

[138] Camille, *Gothic Idol*, 225.

> Whereas St. Bernard had argued that imagery was an obstacle to transcendent experience, by the end of the thirteenth century, imagery was, to the contrary, frequently considered an ideal vehicle for transporting the soul to God.[139]

Hamburger works primarily on female devotional habits, but as John's narrative clearly expresses, this type of devotion was not exclusive to women. In fact it is John's, and subsequently his audience of medieval monks', belief in vivification that provides credence to the *Notre Dame la Blanche* to miraculous transformation into the Virgin Mary.

John's and his reader's understanding of this phenomenon, the miraculous vivification of the Virgin Mary, derived from a universal acceptance of miracles. In the fourth century St. Augustine established the precedent for how medieval people viewed miracles — they were always manifestations of God's power.[140] As acts of God, miracles defied laws of nature; they were extraordinary yet common in the medieval world. Miracles were employed to stir emotion and increase faith, as the *Miracles* of Chartres did in the twelfth century and continue to do so to the present day. In fact St. Augustine was under the impression that, "unbelievers are excited to believe by miracles, and they also confirm faith, so that wonders animate the faithful and confound nonbelievers."[141] Thus, the miracles of John's prologue are not unbelievable or myths to be dismissed, but rather acts of God to be accepted. It is John's usage of miracles throughout his prologue that denies any notion of necromancy in the *Liber visionum*.

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[139] Jeffery Hamburger, *The Vision and the Visionary* (New York: Zone Books, 1998), 121.
[140] Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind*, 3-4.
[141] Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind*, 30.

Miracles were often seen as an accepted way for a person to interact with the supernatural; God's control and mediation over any act sanctified its unusual circumstances or outcomes.[142] In opposition to miracles was magic, the invocation of demons to do one's bidding. Although there seems to be present a definitive line between magic and miracles, this line was often blurred, even absent at times. The structure of petitioning for a miracle was very similar to the invocation of demons; both involved prayers and images, and at times the intended result could not even distinguish miracle from magic. In many instances, "magic" was the term conferred upon miracles that did not achieve positive results. John, however, utilizes miracles to dispel opposition, counterattacking those who would claim that his text is necromantic. In fact, John's miracles as embodied in the vivification of the Virgin Mary, express a widely accepted means of Mariology. Within his miracles there is a sense of commonality, a universal acceptance that evades dispute. The Virgin Mary was considered one of the "most moving and literally mediating of Gothic images."[143] Therefore, her miraculous transformation before John was as commonplace as any miracle could be in the medieval world. The precedent for such miracles was woven into the physical fabric, that is the architecture, of the cathedral.

When a medieval visitor entered the Cathedral of Chartres, she was astounded by the visual stimuli she encountered. Although John focuses mainly on the *Notre Dame la Blanche*, the visual splendor that surrounded its presence would have been unforgettable to those who witnessed it. The floors were stained with the blues and reds of the stained

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[142] Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind*, 9-11.
[143] Camille, *Gothic Idol*, 224.

glass, their telltale print on the floor beckoning the viewer to look up [Fig. 19]. Tapestries depicting the Incarnation, the Virgin's first miracle, adorned the lower walls of the nave, having been given to the cathedral in the late twelfth century by Bishop Guillermus.[144] As one's eyes progressed upwards one saw the walls of the nave soar and loom above, being pierced three times: first by pointed arches that separate the nave from the flanking aisles; second by the triforium with its sequence of arches that add contrast to the rhythm below it; and third by the clerestory of windows that shine light down to the floor, bringing the viewer back to her starting place [Fig. 20]. The three levels: arcade, triforium, and clerestory hinted at the miracle of the Trinity, yet the windows at the summit illustrate another miracle, namely, the intercessory powers of the Virgin Mary which magnifies the sacred nature of the cathedral.

The windows of the clerestory recreate the historical validity of the Virgin's intercessory power and accentuate the devotional shift of the public from the crypt to the altar. Jane Williams relates that when Chartres Cathedral was built, the *Notre Dame la Blanche* was placed on the altar, posed very much like the highly venerated crypt statue, the *Virgo Paritura*, and the west front *sedes sapientiae* relief. Williams concludes that this act shifted the focus of worship and pilgrimage from the crypt to the altar.[145] The stained glass windows annunciated this shift, presenting images of devotion to the *sedes sapientiae* in the core of the cathedral. Williams recreates the visual impact of these windows, citing their importance in the cathedral.[146] In the ambulatory an image of

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[144] Hayes, *Body and Sacred Place in Medieval Europe*, 37.
[145] Williams, *Bread, Wine, and Money*, 57.
[146] Williams, *Bread, Wine, and Money*, 57.

Cardinal Stephen, a twelfth century devotee, kneels before the image of the *Notre Dame la Blanche* attesting to the reverence awarded to her [Fig. 21]. The Miracles of the Virgin window in the south aisle illustrate pilgrims and worshippers bringing gifts and awaiting miracles at the main altar [Fig. 22]. In a visual culmination of this theme, the Virgin and the Christ child are depicted in the clerestory of the apse, the Christ Child holding his hand in benediction, blessing those who kneel before Him and His mother. The immediacy of the image would transfix the viewer, and provided that the circumstances were right, could set the stage for a miracle to occur. Thus, for the readers who were reliving the visual experience of Chartres with John, these images would have proved their belief in miracles.

Not only does the stained glass allude to the probability of a miracle, the architecture, the history, the devotional aids also all encourage this possibility. In the *thema*, the miracle manifests itself in *Notre Dame la Blanche's* slow beckoning to John to come seek comfort in her; a miracle so blindly believed by John that he does not even acknowledge it as a transfiguration of the statue. The next vision that serves as a particularly crucial point in the understanding of the *Liber visionum* as a whole, the point at which one either gives into John's narrative or jerks back in disbelief, is the vision that recounts the revelation of the *Liber visionum*.

The first vision John describes to the reader after his confession of practicing the *Ars Notoria*, is filled with excitement and wonder at divine Grace. Yet, simultaneously, suspicions of others' reactions pervade the text:

> "Mary, if the book of that most nefarious art of necromancy is discovered to be mine, will it be said that this is no miracle, but by means of that art that I made

> your image descend and change? And what shall I do with the books of this science? Shall I remove and hide them from my colleagues?" While I was thinking these things over, I woke up. And in memory of this vision I composed the prayer Gratias ago tibi…[147]

Within this text John attempts to confront the mistrust of his composition, the suspicions of evil doing that plague him. He questions the Virgin on the validity of her appropriate transfiguration, asserting the positive nature of her transformation from silver image to carnal form, yet leaving the answer – which could legitimize this miracle and in turn validate John's means of revelation – to the miracle itself. Chartres' entire physical presence confirms John's claim. Chartres' history of miracles is depicted within its walls, showing illustrations of the miraculous vivifications of the Virgin. There is the window of Cardinal Stephen lying prostrate before the Virgin, and in the Miracle Window where pilgrims and worshippers bring gifts and await miracles. In addition, the relic of the *sancta camisia* is a conductor for miracles. Although John awakens before he receives confirmation from the Virgin, the cathedral already proclaims it for her.

John, however, continues to entreat the Virgin Mary for her consensus, desiring a firm, verbal acknowledgment. In the last vision that John describes in the *Liber visionum*, the Virgin gives her consent. By doing so she legitimizes the benignity of *Liber visionum*, attaching her sacred reputation to it. In the last vision, John envisions himself in the church of Otroniacum. This is the only vision after John's confession that is set outside of Chartres; however, the Virgin's response to John's petitions is telling of how the reader should view this change of venue:

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[147] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber visionum*," 187-88.

> "My lady and my friend, if it pleases you, may I compose a book of just thirty simple prayers, by which I might be able to come to understanding of all the scriptures, arts and sciences, in your name, since it turned out that it did not please you that I should do this through the Ars Notoria?" And lo, that wooden image was transformed into the human likeness of the same undefiled Virgin, and she spoke with me, saying, as though unwilling and heavily, and as though she tired herself by speaking, "It pleases me that you should compose such a book as you have asked me for."

At first, the Virgin is not very forthcoming; in fact, in John's description she seems very annoyed that he would petition her with this question. Is it then that she had already authorized John's writing of the *Liber visionum*?

The previous visions seem to confirm this assumption. For example, in the third vision when John succumbs to feelings of doubt, afraid to recite a verse he created for the praise of the Virgin, he receives a vision of Chartres. John stands between the altar and choir of the cathedral, listening to the canons sing his verse. After seeing this, John says, "if this verse were forbidden, those who are singing it would be excommunicated. And therefore I am well able to say it, just as they are, because it does not displease the Virgin, in fact it pleases her."[148] John bases his reasoning on subtly implied precepts, namely, that both the canons, due to their reverence and adherence to orthodoxy, and the Virgin are able to legitimize these performative acts. However, even beyond this reasoning, John is able to deduce that the Virgin would be pleased because 1.) the Augustinian canons are singing the verse, but most importantly 2.) the act of the Augustinian canons singing is performed in a repository of sanctity where the Virgin's will is done. Although the Virgin Mary does not show herself to confirm the sanctity of the verse, the cathedral is licensed to illustrate her will and grace. Functioning in this

[148] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's *Liber Visionum*," 190.

way, Chartres Cathedral becomes the embodiment of John's advice, "Satan can never appear alone in a church or another holy place – rather the blessed Virgin will appear."[149] The cathedral becomes a personification of the Virgin Mary; as the simulacrum of the Virgin transforms into the carnal and corporeal manifestation of the Virgin, Chartres Cathedral assumes, in its cold, hard stone, the attributes and authority of the Virgin Mary. For John's readers, the concreteness of the cathedral, both in terms of its actual physical representation and the dogma it represents, provides the means for John's claims to legitimacy. All is possible within the cathedral.

[149] Fanger and Watson, "The Prologue to John of Morigny's Liber Visionum," 204.

IX. Illustrations

Figure. 1. London, MS Burney 275, Book of the diverse liberal arts, f. 94: Grammar teaching the parts of speech.

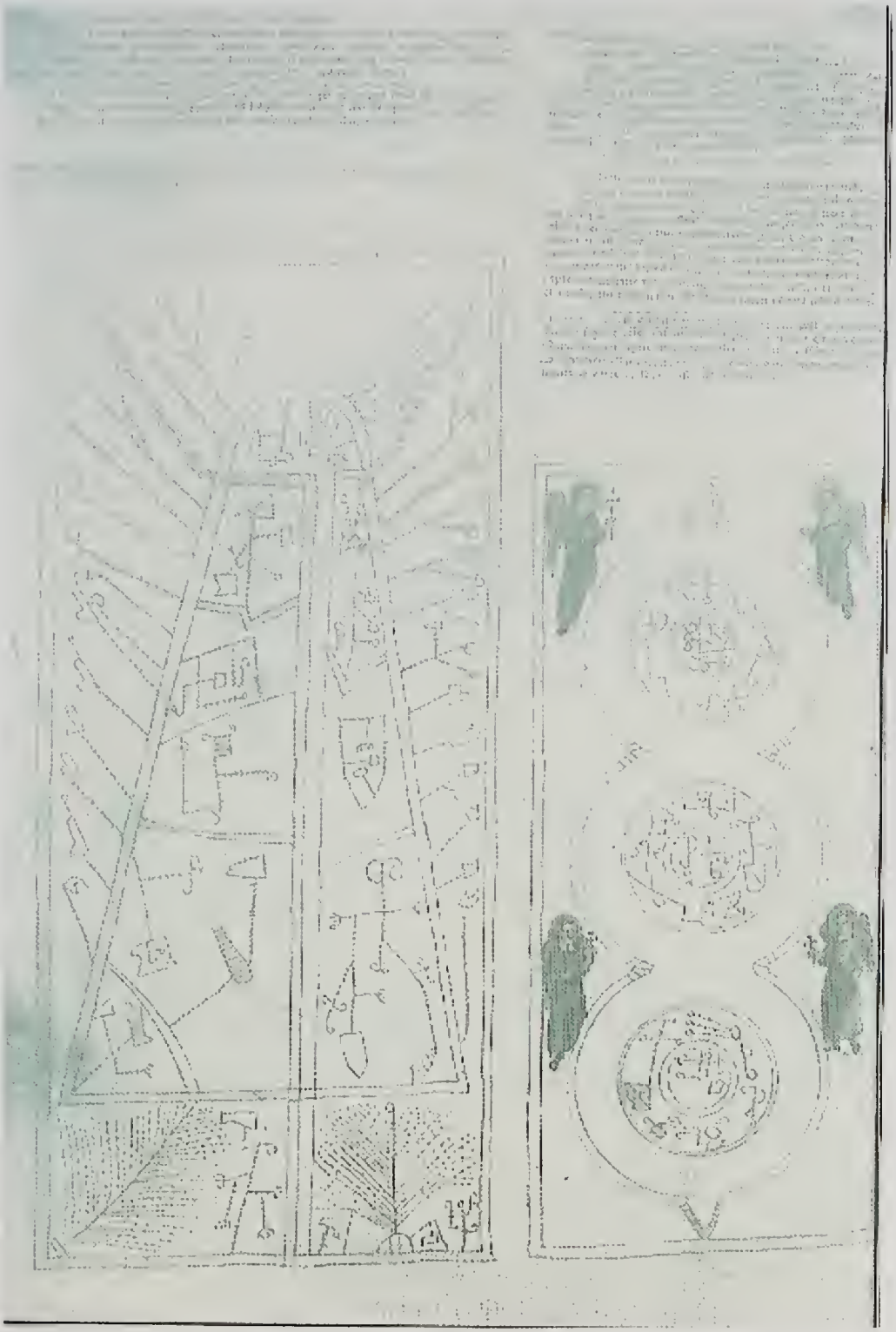

Figure 2. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 9336, *Ars Notoria*, f.27v: second and third figures of Philosophy.

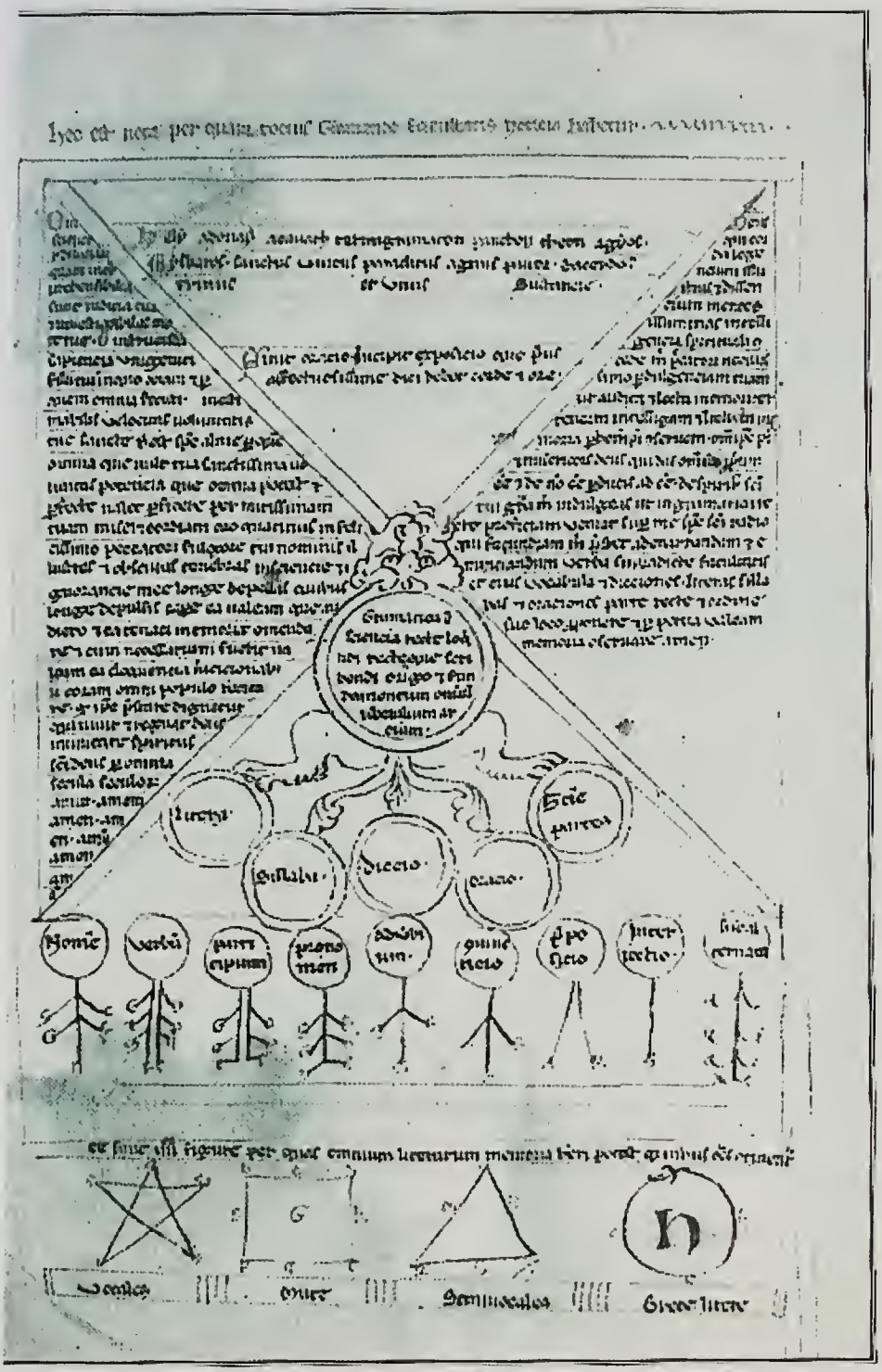

Figure 3. Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS E.V. 13, *Ars Notoria*, f. 6: the nota of Grammar.

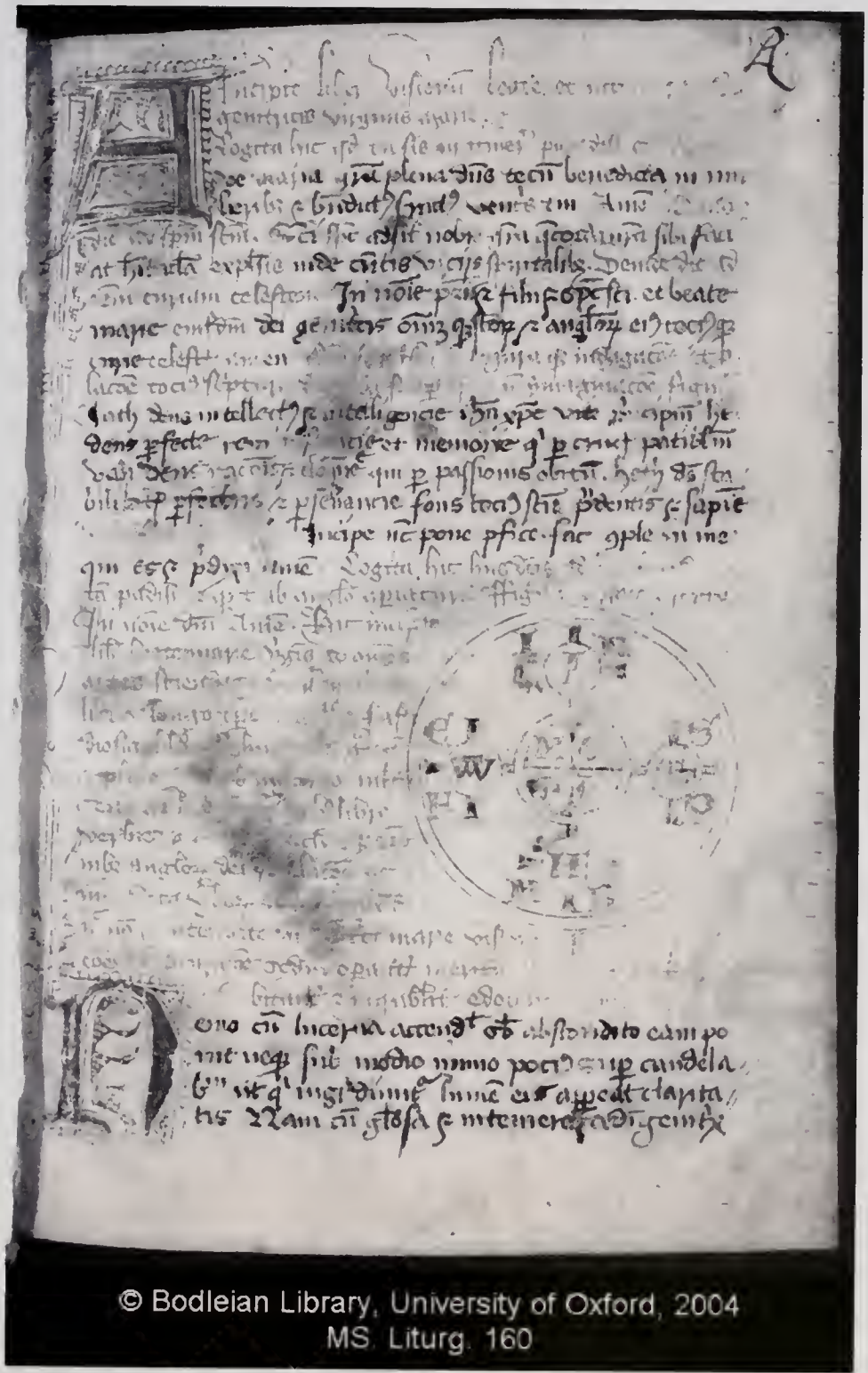

Figure 4. Oxford, Bodley Library, MS. Liturg. 160, *Liber visionum*: tetragrammaton.

Figure 5. Oxford, Bodley Library, MS. Liturg. 160, *Liber visionum*: pentacle.

Figure 6. Chartres Cathedral: west façade. c. 1145-1155.

Figure 7. Chartres Cathedral: west façade, south tympanum. c. 1145-1155.

Figure 8. Chartres Cathedral: west façade, south tympanum. c. 1145-1155.

Figure 9. Chartres Cathedral: west façade, south tympanum, Music and Grammar. c. 1145-1155.

Figure 10. Chartres Cathedral: west façade, south tympanum, close up of archivolts with Dialect and Angels. c. 1145-1155.

Figure 11. Chartres Cathedral: Chartres Cathedral: west façade, south tympanum, the personifications of the Liberal Arts with masters, Dialectic with Aristotle, Music with representative, and Grammar with Priscian.

Figure 12. Chartres Cathedral: north façade. c. 1200-1225.

Figure 13. Chartres Cathedral: north façade. c. 1200-1225.

Figure 14. Chartres Cathedral: north façade, central tympanum, the Triumph of the Virgin. c. 1200-1225.

Figure 15. Chartres Cathedral: north façade, left tympanum, the adoration of the Magi and the sleep of the Magi; the nativity and annunciation to the shepherds. c. 1200-1225.

Figure 16. Chartres Cathedral: north façade, four mechanical arts: Architecture, Painting, Philosophy, and Magic. 1316?

Figure 17. Chartres Cathedral: west façade, central tympanum, Second Coming, 1145-1155.

Figure 18. Chartres Cathedral: the 19th Century altar. The statue, Our Lady of the Pillar, probably dates from the 16th century. This is where Notre Dame La Blanche would have been placed when John encountered it.

Figure 19. Chartres Cathedral: View of the triforium and clerestory windows.

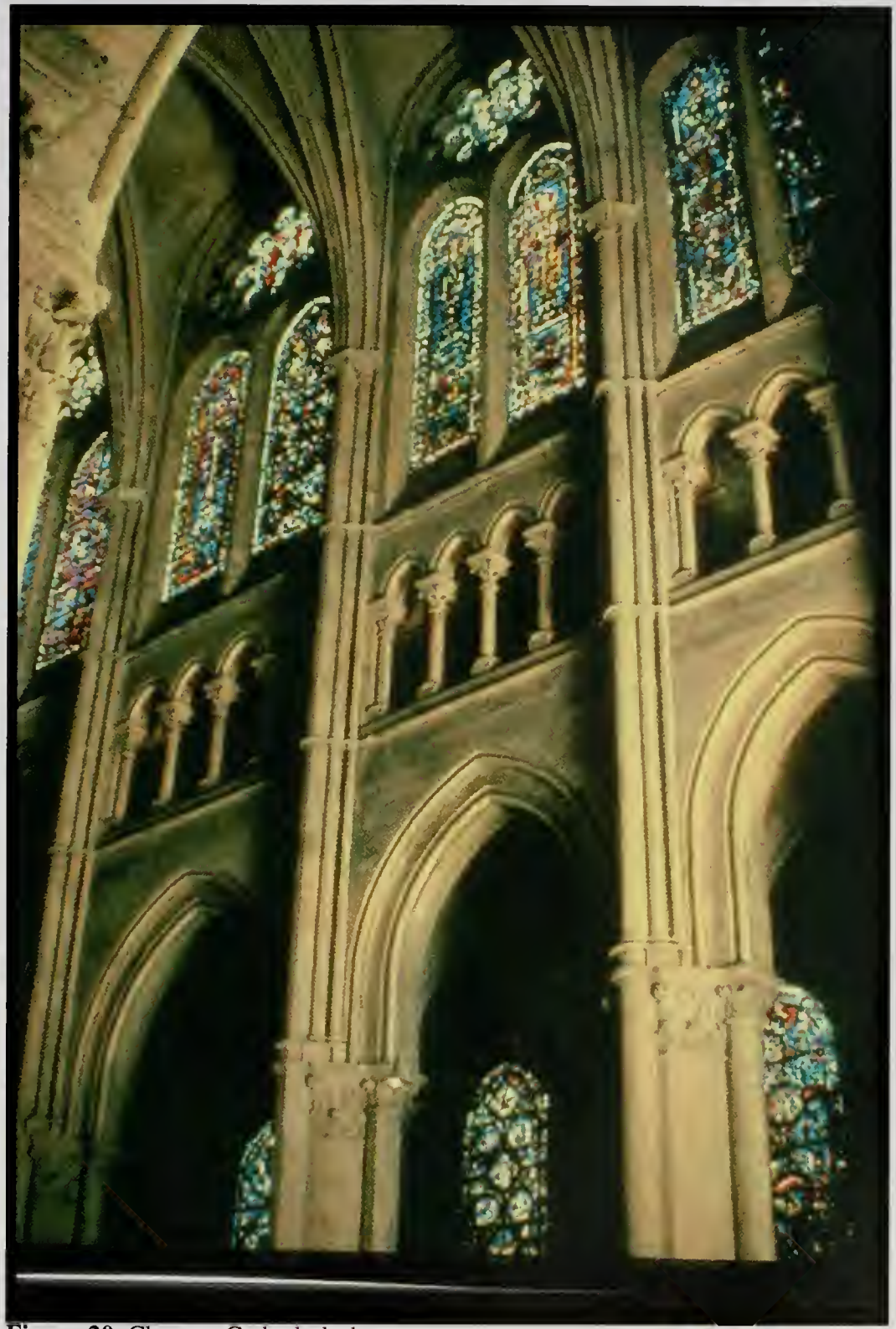

Figure 20. Chartres Cathedral: the nave.

Figure 21. Chartres Cathedral: ambulatory window, Cardinal Stephen.

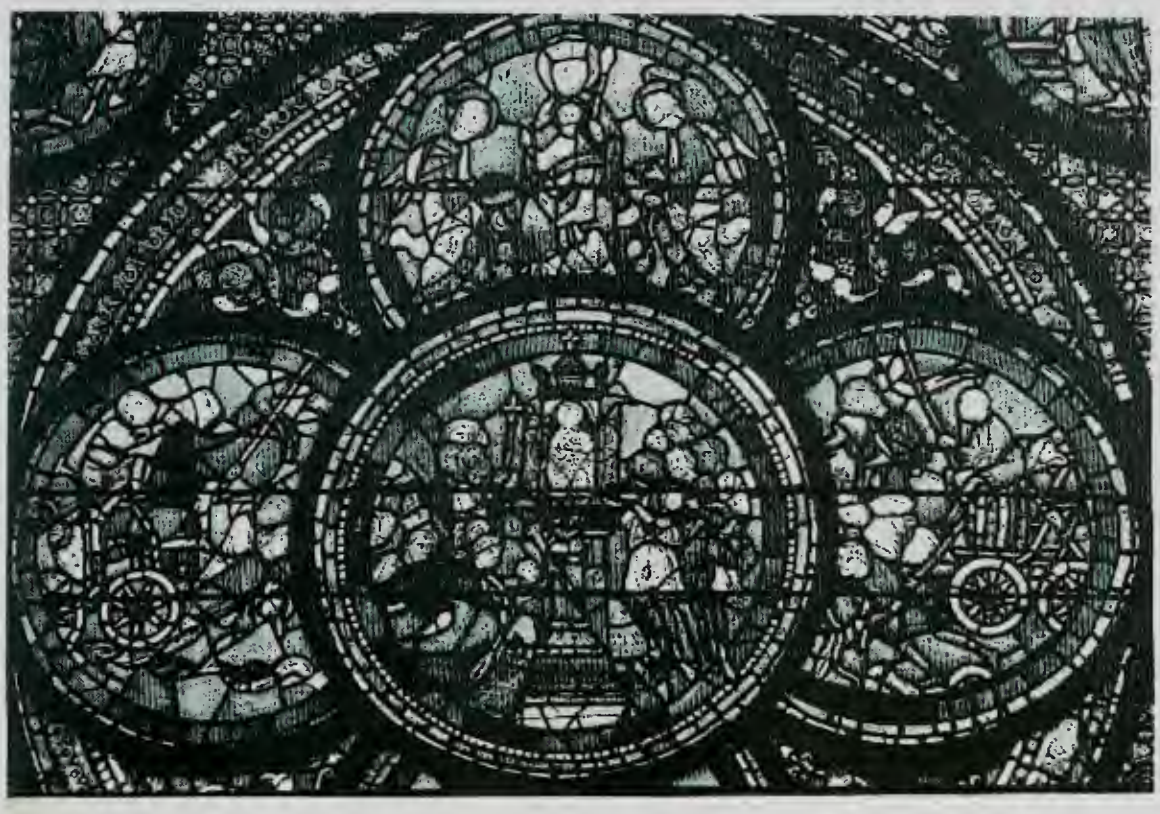

Figure 22. Chartres Cathedral: south aisle window, Pilgrims bringing gifts to the statue of the Virgin.

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